

IN THESE TIMES

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The New Patriotism
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IN EL SALVADOR

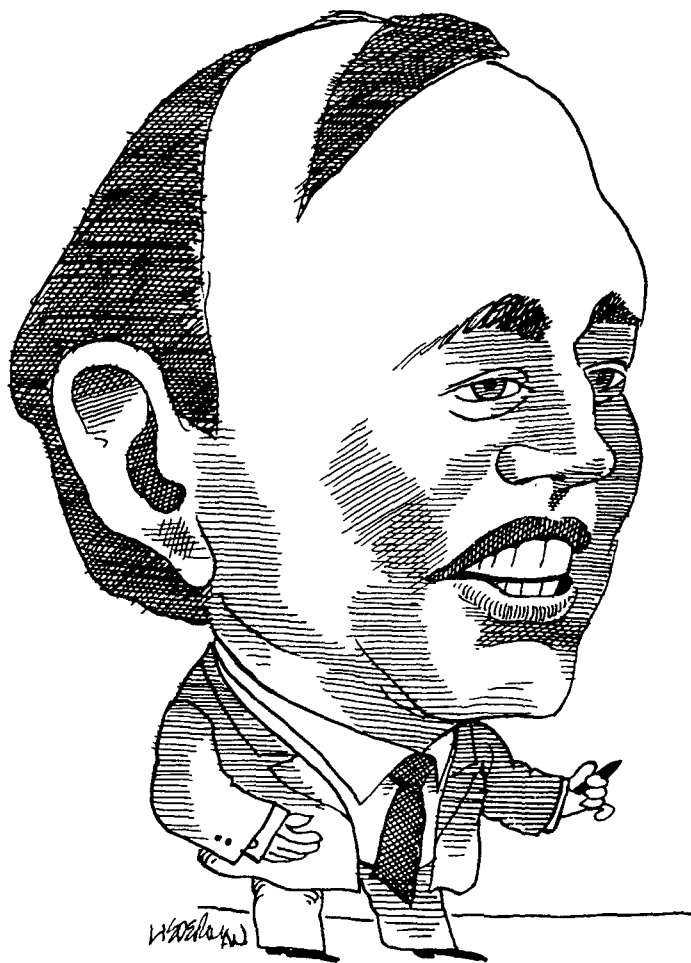
AN IMPORTANT
**FIRST
STEP**

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Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock

THE STORY INSIDE

Labour Party takes on 'lawfulness' issue

By Jeremy Harding

LONDON

Extensive public interest in Britain over events at this year's Labour Party Conference, held September 29-October 6 in Blackpool, was hardly surprising. Nor was the sense that the coal strike, now in its seventh month, would generate definitive answers about the party's future.

Although the National Union of Mineworkers' (NUM) action against proposed pit closures was expected to dominate the conference, British press and TV coverage of the meeting did almost as much as NUM leader Arthur Scargill and the miners' union executive committee in creating a stand-or-fall issue for the Labour Party. What position would the party officially adopt on the strike? Would it give whole-hearted support to the NUM? Could the conference struggle through the week without party leader Neil Kinnock being forced to the wall on the vital electoral questions—condemnation of police methods in the pit dispute and leniency over violence by the pickets themselves?

Before the conference Kinnock and others had negotiated with the NUM in an attempt to defuse the wording of a union statement calling for total condemnation of the police and full support of the miners' strike. Kinnock's well-founded anxieties concerned the present mood of British voters. Recent opinion polls have shown a substantial drop in support for Labour since its closer association with the strike—and by extension, in the eyes of the public, with the violence that is now a matter of course on the picket lines. Like the Falklands factor, so significant for Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the election of 1983, there is currently talk of a "Scargill factor," which appears to be damaging the Labour Party's long-term parliamentary hopes in proportion as the violence on the picket line continues and the Labour Party rallies uneasily behind the strike.

As it turned out, the wording of the statement before the conference could not have been more provocative. It condemned "unlawful actions by the police, organized violence against miners, their picket lines and their communities by means of an unconstitutional nationally controlled police force."

The statement prompted a predictably acrimonious debate that drew howls of alarm and derision from Labour's adversaries. But by the end of the debate, the conference had voted in favor of legislation to exclude police from any industrial dispute, to make police activities directly accountable to local authority police committees, to ban the use of riot equipment and formulate a socialist policy on policing to play an important part in the next election manifesto.

It was clear before the conference convened that the coal crisis was a test case on whether or not the Labour Party had a clear

commitment to due process of law. The point was emphasized in an officious piece of maneuvering from the chairman of the police federation, who commented mid-conference that police officers might no longer be able to cooperate with a future Labour government.

At the heart of Labour's anti-police sentiments—and the attendant issue of respect for the law—lie legitimate grievances about changes in British policing since the strike began. Photographs of arbitrary arrests and sanctions far away from the picket lines, mounted baton charges and ranks of helmeted police beating truncheons in unison against their riot shields are hard to reconcile with the defense of democracy. The unofficial creation of a national police force deployed and synchronized like an army is also disturbing, and this fact touches a broader public than the strikers themselves, who have their own frustrations about the police acting as "an escort service for scabs."

Kinnock's challenge at this year's conference was not to duck the problem of the new policing, but to ride out the surge of militant emotion brought on by the strike. The challenge to Labour was to emerge from the meeting as a credible party that could govern effectively in the future. This, of course, was only possible if Kinnock could demonstrate convincingly that the party was prepared to respect the law—which, in turn, meant the party had to distance itself from the strikers.

But there was a groundswell of impatience in the party with criticism of the miners' tactics. David Basnett, leader of the General, Municipal and Boilermakers union, was booed and hissed when he urged, "Never must we serve [Thatcher's] cause by stirring up public hostility. It is the violence that does that."

Scargill, on the other hand, delivered a skillful piece of oratory that linked Labour's fortunes to the strike, casting it yet again as an all-out political confrontation with the government.

Two factors deepened the lawfulness issue further. First, Scargill was handed a summons in the conference hall requesting his appearance in a London court to face contempt of court allegations: he had said that the strike was official when it had been ruled illegal. Scargill ignored the summons. Second, the conference urged Labour local councils not to go through with the drastic cuts demanded by central government, and stated its support for those inner-city councils deciding to act in breach of the law by maintaining a wide range of social services they consider essential.

With hindsight, Kinnock's conference speech was the only available option under the circumstances. Having suffered a defeat the day before on a proposed emendation of constitutional procedure for re-electing members of parliament, Kinnock rose to reassert his leadership and to remodel the Labour as a law-abiding entity.

The speech was clearly geared for consumption outside the conference, and the delegates knew it. "We cannot sharpen legality as our main weapon," he said, "and simultaneously scorn legality if it does not suit us at the present time." He expressed his condemnation of picket violence in the context of the damage done to the mining communities by high-handed government economic policy. The police, he said, were being used as an instrument of policy—a policy that entailed not only provoking the strike in the first place, but keeping it going for seven months.

To the conference itself, Kinnock delivered a plea for realism. The alternatives to a democratic socialist road had been ruled out during the '30s, he said. Any agenda that ignored the ballot box would fail to win the support of the British people. The message was simple: parliamentary office and politics as a practice outside the law were mutually exclusive.

The other major item on the agenda was Labour's defense policy. Here the party showed strong signs that a non-nuclear defense position could become the basis of solid agreement among the membership. A resolution advocating expulsion of all American troops in Britain was rejected, but another calling for removal of the cruise missiles carried easily. After the conference, in a long televised session, Labour's spokesman on Europe, Robin Cook, discussed the party's overall defense policy—including cancellation of Trident and decommissioning Polaris.

The reverberations of the conference were quickly drowned out by the Tory Party's own annual gathering in Brighton—a show of allegiance to the Thatcher version of democracy that benefited enormously from the October 12 IRA bomb attack. Indeed, it is hard to imagine anything more advantageous to the Conservatives in their determination to double the stakes on the perennial law-and-order issue and assume the role of a government of national defense. The Labour Party, in contrast, must now consider the repercussions of the conference.

Beneath the steady stream of motions and resolutions lie fundamental differences on Labour's nature and agenda. The party's complexion has changed since the heady arrogant days of Harold Wilson's leadership, and this is reflected in the extended influence of an active grassroots left. For many newer members, coming in from the cold of the far left and attempting a long march through the Labour Party as an institution, legality and parliamentary democracy have no absolute value. One speech in response to Kinnock's position on the rule of the law characterized all the achievements of the labor movement as gains established in spite of the law, not through it.

A long and substantial Marxist tradition views the law and the offices of Parliament as instruments of power servicing the interests of a dominant class. From this perspective, Labour's role as a potential governing party becomes only one option among others. This perspective has gained strength inside the party. It is likely to find favor as long as Britain remains polarized.

But it is also destined to unsettle members with very different views, dividing the party along the classic radical versus reformist fault line always present in European socialism. For all of Kinnock's valiant public relations work, the question of whether or not the party should see gaining office as its first priority may already have been decided—at least by many constituency members. But the battle is by no means over. That it continues to be conducted in public is a testament to the openness of the party.

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Important political opening for El Salvador's left forces

By Chris Norton

LA PALMA, EL SALVADOR

SALVADORAN PRESIDENT JOSE Napoleon Duarte called it a miracle, and it seemed that way to many. Archbishop Rivera y Damas emerged from the small church of La Palma and read the joint statement in which the government and the FDR-FMLN guerrilla opposition agreed to set up a special commission and start the ongoing process of talks.

The next meeting won't be until the second half of November, and most people here acknowledge that the road to peace will be long. Yet the October 15 meeting in La Palma left many Salvadorans in a buoyant mood.

"This is the greatest day in history," said one Christian Democratic office worker from San Salvador.

"There are conflicting points of view and there are differences in analyzing the national reality, but we have reached an initial accord that satisfies us and makes us look at the future of our country with optimism," Guillermo Ungo, president of the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), told the crowd of about 10,000 gathered in the small plaza in front of the church.

Ungo, Duarte's running mate in the 1972 election, had reason to be happy. "The left has gained more than it expected," said one observer who requested anonymity. By meeting with the FDR-FMLN the government granted them *de facto* recognition as a legitimate power.

"The most important part of this first step on the road to peace is that the Salvadoran government, for the first time, has recognized the FMLN as a representative force," said Commandante Ferman Cienfuegos, one of the FMLN representatives, after the meeting in a guerrilla camp near La Palma. Cienfuegos heads the National Resistance (RN), one of the smallest of five guerrilla groups that make up the FMLN.

The FMLN was also represented by Facundo Guardado, the popular liberation forces (FPL) commandante and two other guerrilla commanders, one man and one woman, identified only by their first names, who reportedly belong to the PRTC and the ERP.

But is Duarte trying to reassert control over the peace process?

Joaquin Villalobos, the head of the Revolutionary Army of the People (ERP), was scheduled to appear, but an FMLN spokesperson said that he had been denied the civilian helicopter he had requested from the government to transport him from the ERP base area in Morazan to the meeting in La Palma, Chalatenango.

U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering, in an obvious propaganda move, tried to explain Villalobos' non-appearance as a sign of discord between the different guerrilla factions. Yet Villalobos' statements on *Radio Venceremos* indicated total support for the talks. So despite Pickering's statements, the unity of the left seems to be at a highpoint as evidenced by the rapid, unified FDR-FMLN acceptance of the meeting less than 12 hours after Duarte's October 8 speech at

the United Nations. The almost unbelievable event set in motion by that UN speech also legitimized the concept of dialog, long considered a subversive issue. This is an important political opening for El Salvador's left forces.

Duarte, of course, has also benefited from his bold peace offensive. He now wears the mantle of peacemaker, despite his rejection of earlier rebel proposals to negotiate.

But Duarte has also set in motion forces and expectations he may not be able to control—a consideration that reportedly led to initial U.S. opposition to the talks. For example, as soon as the FDR-FMLN accepted Duarte's challenge to talk, local radio stations began to call up exiled opposition leaders like Ungo and Ruben Zamora to do live interviews.

The events in La Palma were televised, so many Salvadorans in the capital and the western part of the country got their first chance to look at and listen to the left in many years. Speaking on the church steps, Guillermo Ungo said, "We want peace—but peace with justice and liberty." Cienfuegos, dressed in olive-drab fatigues, called on people to form peace and dialog committees in every neighborhood of the country.

Undoubtedly, the left will try to take advantage of this political opening. Their mass political message was hard hit by the repression that reached its height in 1980-81, and reviving it is a priority. "Peace with justice" is an obvious issue they can organize around. They are also pushing for including all popular sectors in the peace negotiations as they see the possibility of forming alliances. Although the left is pleased that the talks came off, they expect an intensification of the war, especially after U.S. elections.

Concessions by both sides made the talks possible. Previously, Duarte had refused to talk until the guerrillas laid down their arms. But this time Duarte had omitted that precondition.

The FDR-FMLN didn't raise the issue of power-sharing either before or during the talks. Aracundo Guardado of the FPL said that although the guerrillas haven't abandoned their demands for a "popular government of broad participation," both they and the government were willing to make concessions so that a meeting would come off.

Yet despite the joint declaration to continue meeting, the two sides are still far apart. Duarte reiterates that he can act only within the framework of the constitution—that if the rebels agree to reincorporate themselves in the "democratic process" [electoral process], he will ask the Constituent Assembly for an amnesty and arrange other guarantees.

Duarte claims that he has already made important structural changes since he took office this past spring, the restructuring of the security forces under Colonel Lopez Nulla and the curbing of "abuses" under authority.

After hearing Duarte's proposal within the private meeting, Ungo, acting as the guerrilla spokesperson, made a long presentation, explaining how the country's political and economic structures really hadn't changed all that much—that a small oligarchy still controlled the economy. The rebels were reportedly also unimpressed with Duarte's claim to have curbed abuses of power, although they conceded that death-squad killings had declined. But the rebels pointed out that the repressive apparatus still exists.

(Death-squad killings have begun again after seeming to come to a halt. Last month a university professor was executed, and in the past week the union leader from the radical Bank Workers Union was found shot. The secret Anti-

Communist Army took credit for the first killing, as well as the setting of two powerful bombs in the capital, and threatened Duarte and unionists who supported dialog with death.)

The rebels also reportedly energetically denounced—both to Duarte and Defense Minister Vides Casanova, who was one of the five representatives of the government's side—the killing of civilians by aerial bombardment. They also claimed that bombings of the civilian population have increased since Duarte took office.

The morning after the meeting in La Palma, *Radio Venceremos*, the clandestine rebel radio station, listed 29 demands including: the prosecution of the death squads and accounting of those "disappeared"; freedom for political prisoners; the end of aerial bombardment and

own party, the Christian Democrats.

The most visible criticism came from the centrist labor coalition, the Popular Democratic Unity (UPD), which had put Duarte in the election. On August 30 the UPD issued a statement calling for dialog with the opposition. The document itself was fairly mild, but the introduction written by Miguel Vasquez wasn't.

"The social pact between UPD and the Christian Democrats wasn't formed merely to bring in the power but rather to bring in the power so that they would be at the service of the people, of the workers," said Vasquez, a leader of one of the unions that make up the UPD.

"While the war continues, the promises of an economic reactivation remain illusory. Everything remains an illusion while the war goes on," Vasquez added.

Within the Roman Catholic Church there has also been frustration with the absence of peace talks. San Salvador Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas, who favors seeking a peaceful solution to the war, is known to be a close friend of Duarte. Guerrillas have said that the archbishop delivered a rebel offer of peace talks to Duarte in May, but the president did not reply.



President Duarte now wears the mantle of peacemaker, despite his rejection of earlier rebel proposals.

the "economic strangulation" of the civilian population in zones of FMLN control; a general increase in workers' salaries; freedom of political expression and mobilization; re-establishment of the suspended Stage Three of the agrarian reform; withdrawal of U.S. military advisors and suspension of U.S. military aid.

Despite Duarte's attempt to portray himself as the prince of peace, he has rejected at least two written proposals for talks from the FDR-FMLN since he became president. The FDR-FMLN has consistently advocated political dialog for at least the last two years.

Duarte's initiative was also spurred by external and internal pressures. The Socialist International, the International Christian Democratic Movement, the Contadora countries and the European Economic Community (EEC) were all urging peace talks.

But even more important was the internal pressure. Duarte's lack of progress in solving the war was one of his most vulnerable points, drawing fire from labor and church groups and even from his

The church, however, continues to call for peace. "Rivera y Damas always says we don't want war. It's routinely said, but important. It means that no other change in the country is important if it doesn't lead to peace," said a church official.

According to sources here, Duarte's own Christian Democratic Party—especially a faction led by Planning Minister Fidel Chavez Mena that is considered more liberal than Duarte's faction—was pressuring him to negotiate.

The sources said Chavez Mena favors the "Colombian model," a reference to the government's recent signing of cease-fire agreements with four Colombian guerrilla groups. Duarte, they said, represents the "Venezuela model" referring to that country's military defeat of a leftist insurgency in the '60s and a later decision to allow them to join the democratic political process.

"The country is tired of war. Fidel Chavez Mena could channel the discontent from both the UPD and certain sectors of the business community," said

Continued on page 7

IN SHORT

Contract nixed at Lordstown

Auto workers at the Lordstown, Ohio, General Motors plant lived up to their feisty reputation (*In These Times*, Oct. 10) by rejecting the new national contract 3,530 to 1,208 (with the adjoining fabrication plant also voting "no" 1,430 to 699), reports David Moberg. It was the widest margin of defeat for the contract, which featured modest financial gains and a "job bank" designed to provide workers with one year seniority either their income or a job. The local leadership had lukewarmly recommended the agreement, but elsewhere the international union's representatives worked vigorously to win approval, even announcing that a "no" vote would mean an immediate strike midway in the balloting when the tide seemed to be going against the contract. Other big locals, such as Linden, N.J., Wilmington, Del., Norwood, Ohio, and Doraville, Ga., voted against it, but major local unions in Flint, Pontiac, Orion and Detroit, Mich., Oklahoma City, Tarrytown, N.Y., and Framingham, Mass., voted for the contract. In the final tally, 57 percent of those voting ratified the agreement.

Ford workers will almost certainly approve a similar contract signed early last week. One addition to their contract: a pledge not to close during the life of the contract any plants not already scheduled for shutdown.

The selling of the president

They call themselves the "Newspaper Friends of Reagan-Bush" and they hope to re-elect the Republican ticket by forwarding the administration's position papers to small-town weeklies where they're to be used for background for articles and editorials. The preparation and distribution costs will be paid for by the Reagan-Bush campaign staff, the "friends" perform the invaluable service of ferreting out potential Reagan supporters and encouraging them to use the material. With two weeks left until the election, national chairman George Measer claims they've sent 5,000 packets of information to newspapers across the country and have solicited the help of 42 publishers to head the organization for their states.

Measer—publisher of eight suburban Buffalo, N.Y., newspapers with a total circulation of 55,000—defends his partisan activities: "As a businessman, I have the right to support candidates of my choice whether I'm selling apples, potatoes or newspapers." In fact, Measer sees his role in Reagan's re-election not only as a right, but motivated by understandable self-interest. "I'm a Republican conservative and I think Reagan's been good for business," he told *In These Times*. Although Measer claims the idea for "Newspaper Friends" was his, he also mentions that Republicans were trying to find a way to reach small-town dailies, "and then he came along"—which makes it all seem a little more than happenstance, especially coming from a man who helped form the same type of committee for Richard Nixon in 1968 and 1972.

Not me, man

While the Reagan administration is currying favor with the small-town press, its Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) was busily harrasing one small New York newspaper—*El Diario*. In the last few weeks, the INS visited the offices of the Spanish language daily to check the immigration papers of three reporters and an editor. The INS found nothing out of kilter and claimed the visits were just part of a "routine operation." Editor Manuel de Dios finds the timing of the INS raids rather suspicious, though: "It was too much of a coincidence" that three of the people they wanted to talk to wrote articles on the deplorable conditions at a detention center operated by the INS. Besides the detention center expose, *El Diario* is known for its frequent editorials opposing the recently-killed Simpson-Mazzoli Immigration Reform bill.

Calling all Jews

What the campaign game lacks in intelligence it sometimes makes up for in entertainment value. The Republican National Committee—eager to reach what they consider a "new constituency"—funded Telephone Access of Washington, D.C., to contact Jews in New York and California for a campaign pitch. The callers were instructed not to mention the Republican National Committee and to chummily insert "Jewish-sounding names"—Harry and Betty Goodman got extended play—for their own when making the call. A reporter for a small Manhattan weekly uncovered the assumed names ploy, however. She also had the chance to meet some of the callers—mostly Hispanic or Caribbean-born blacks, many thickly accented and all working for \$4 an hour. When contacted in a subsequent follow-up by the *New York Times*, William Greener, the director of communications for the Republican National Committee, expressed his surprise: "Imagine, Haitians posing as Jews."

—Beth Maschinot



The October 13 Midwest Freeze Voter rally drew 35,000 to Chicago to hear speakers Helen Caldicott, Jesse Jackson, Mayor Harold Washington and others. It was rumored that President Reagan was also in the crowd.

TDU presses for an honest contract

CHICAGO—In its eight years of battling the mammoth and tightly controlled bureaucracy of the Teamsters union to make the union more responsive to members' needs, Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU) at times seemed lucky to have survived at all. But the persistent band of 8,000 reformers have increasingly demonstrated that they are a force to be contended with in the union.

More than 450 delegates to the ninth annual convention meeting in Chicago October 12-14 had special reason to cheer despite the recent history of unemployment, concession contracts and shifts to non-union firms in trucking. In late September a federal judge ruled in favor of a complaint by four TDU members that Teamster President Jackie Presser, the main labor supporter of Ronald Reagan, had illegally tried to rush through a new contract at United Parcel Service (UPS).

Last May 1, on the second anniversary of the UPS concession contract, workers were angered to find no cost-of-living increase in their paycheck, since the entire amount had been diverted to pay for benefits. Since UPS profits

were booming (up 48 percent last year over the previous year), Teamster officials were embarrassed at the weak contract. Presser sent a telegram to UPS asking them to share the profits. The company in turn offered a bonus payment—\$500 for part-time workers, \$1,000 for full-time workers—if the Teamsters would renew the contract. Secretly, without any apparent bargaining, Presser accepted the offer and mailed out ballots without anyone but a few top officials even being aware that the contract had been reopened before it was due to expire next summer.

Bill Bauman, chief steward at the 2,000-member UPS local in St. Louis, was shocked to see the ballot in the mail. "I know it's unfair," he told TDU headquarters. "Is it illegal?" Although no federal labor legislation requires that members be given a right to vote on contracts, the Landrum-Griffin act insists that any vote must be taken in a way that is informed and meaningful. In previous cases, TDU attorney Arthur Fox said, courts had upheld that principle in union elections and referenda on major changes, such as mergers. For the first time, that principle has been af-

firmed for contract votes as well.

Presser was forced to send out the contracts again, giving TDU time to argue against the contract for failing to take advantage of the union's strong bargaining position. TDU wants restoration of cost-of-living protection, an end to the two-tier wage system imposed in this contract, and many improvements in working conditions and rights to full-time work. Some TDU leaders fear that new part-time workers, as much as one-fourth the workforce in many locations, may feel no commitment to their jobs and simply leap for the one-time bonus. But TDU was successful a year ago in organizing an overwhelming rejection of special trucking concessions, including a two-tier wage system, that Presser negotiated.

Although TDU has not increased its membership significantly in the last couple of years, it has expanded with new locals in the South and on the west coast. With a wide range of members, including a significant majority of blacks, Hispanics and women, but also including many middle-aged white men who are solid, traditional unionists, TDU has established itself as the only significant national rank-and-file opposition movement. The peculiarly conservative and often corrupt leadership of the Teamsters sustains such organized opposition. But TDU leaders admit that they still haven't reached a watershed point in power, which will probably come when many of the already discontented local Teamster leaders openly fight the international union leadership.

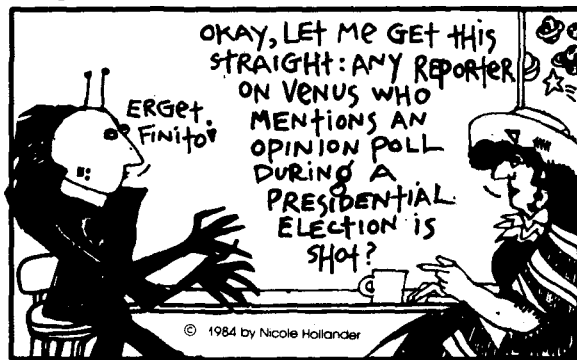
That can be rough. One elected steward told the convention that she was removed from office after her business agent discovered that she was in TDU. Outside the convention, several hundred "loyal Teamsters," apparently organized in large part from Chicago area Teamster staff and some befuddled retirees, picketed the meeting, but they did not attempt to disrupt it as they had in 1983. A TDU lawsuit won an injunction that has slowed down activities of a Presser-supported front group called BLAST, Brotherhood of Loyal Americans and Strong Teamsters.

Despite obstacles and harassment, some people persist. UPS driver Matt Schreiner told the convention, "I heard of this organization that wanted to do what I've wanted to do for 20 years—make the Teamsters union honest. I went to their convention. I said these people are not radicals. These people do not want to tear down the union. They don't want to undermine my company. They want to do what is right, just and moral for fellow Teamsters."

—David Moberg

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



IOWA

Populist Harkin battles Jepsen

By David Moberg

OTTUMWA, IOWA

"I LOVE WAPELLO COUNTY," Tom Harkin exclaimed as he took the lectern in the small hotel ballroom. Eighty people in this unaffluent southeastern Iowa town had paid \$25 apiece to eat and hear the five-term "populist" member of Congress from southwest Iowa promote his challenge to right-wing Republican incumbent Sen. Roger Jepsen.

Harkin had some reasons for his affection in his briefing notes. Whatever the fortunes of Democrats in Iowa in recent years—and they have taken particularly hard lumps with the successive victories of the conservatives over two well-regarded liberal senators, Dick Clark and John Culver—Wapello has gone strongly Democratic.

But Harkin, who has made a national name with his sharp criticism of administration policy in Central America, can't afford to take any votes for granted. Still regarded as one of the best bets for Democratic inroads in the Senate Republican majority, Harkin is in a much tighter, less predictable and nastier battle than many of his supporters had expected.

Harkin's chances to buck the recent conservative victory string benefit from the miserably depressed farm and industrial economy. Ottumwa is a case in point: surrounding farms teeter near bankruptcy and those not on layoff from local meatpacking plants face deep wage cuts forced by their employers. But Harkin is also counting on widespread Iowan misgivings about the arms race to bolster his chances. In the end, however, crucial swing voters may decide the race mainly on issues of character and perceived values. With Jepsen's tattered record and Harkin's efforts to replace discredited "liberalism" with a populism that merges conservative values and left prescriptions, Harkin has a strong chance—if the message gets through.

"Here in the heartland of America, where we grow the food to feed our people and we employ people in small manufacturing, our packing plants, we don't have recovery," Harkin declared angrily to the Wapello Democrats. "We're still in a state of depression." Officially 5.9 percent of the state's workforce was unemployed in August, but Harkin called the figures "phony as a three-dollar bill." Indeed, in March 1983 a detailed Iowa State University household survey of one small town showed that 16.5 percent of the workforce was really unemployed, when officially the rate was 6.5 percent.

"As your senator, I'm not going to rest until we bring recovery back home to Iowa," Harkin pledged. "I want jobs in Iowa for Iowans, not jobs in California or Texas or Georgia or Japan. And a lot of that has to do not only with getting interest rates down and reducing the deficit, but it has to do with how we reorder our spending priorities in Washington today. You're not going to have a recovery in Iowa, you're not going to see the deficit reduced, you're not going to see interest rates come down unless we stop this insane arms race."

There was strong applause from the largely middle-aged, small-town audience of farmers, small business people and workers, just as there had been strong applause from Drake University students earlier in the afternoon for the same cry. Polls show 80 percent of Iowans support the nuclear freeze, and Harkin repeatedly points out that the entire Iowa congressional delegation (three Democrats and three Republican representatives plus conservative Republican Sen. Charles Grassley) except Roger Jepsen voted for the nuclear freeze, against the MX missile and B-1 bomber and against funding for

the Nicaraguan covert war.

Later that evening a supporter in Iowa City, a university town, advised Harkin to tone down his emphasis on war and peace issues. "I'm sorry," he replied, "I have to let the people of Iowa know what the stakes are" in the arms race and the "unconscionable" policies in Central America.

Harkin's peace crusade helps turn out the troops. STARPAC (Stop the Arms Race Political Action Committee) has used nearly 200 videotape copies of a 17-minute film it made on how the arms race hurts Iowa. Featuring much-respected former senator and governor Harold Hughes, the tape is shown in homes and meeting halls and, wherever possible, television. It emphasizes arms control as the "ultimate moral issue of our time," STARPAC leader Bob Branmer said.

Freeze supporters, who are surprisingly strong in small towns and rural areas, are

The latest poll from mid-October shows Harkin leading by 46 to 41 percent.

distributing 60,000 leaflets door-to-door to educate voters on the freeze, MX, star wars and Euromissiles, then following up with voter mobilization. Despite worries that the arms issue has not become the pivotal issue and that renewed "Russophobia" is undermining the freeze appeal (many voters mistakenly think Reagan is for the freeze), Branmer believes the campaign can boost Harkin and turn off support for Jepsen. In heavily Catholic cities in eastern Iowa, Branmer hopes the STARPAC film will "blunt the abortion issue impact."

Anti-abortion agitation and New Right attacks hurt both Clark and Culver significantly, but the Harkin campaign thinks that the scurrilous literature distributed by the Mid-American Conservative Political Action Committee linking Harkin with photos of Idi Amin, Fidel Castro and dead fetuses will have little impact. The zealot anti-abortion vote will give Jepsen a couple of percentage points over Harkin, a pro-choice Catholic who expresses personal misgivings about abortion and prefers encouraging alternatives to prohibition of women's choice.

For 10 years Harkin has held his seat in what is probably the most rural and conservative district in the state. He has succeeded by tending to farm and small-town interests, servicing constituents diligently and identifying with Midwestern rural values of hard work (he has regularly joined constituents on their jobs during his "work days"), family and community stability and thriftiness.

The past four years have led to "the worst farm economy in decades and the most farm losses since the Great Depression," said David Ostendorf, Rural America's Des Moines-based Midwest director. "It's definitely got worse for almost all farmers, except the top quarter to third that will survive by tightening their belts. The other two-thirds are continually sliding down into disaster. One-third to 40 percent won't survive. By the end of 1985, the state department of agriculture estimated in its credit survey, 10 percent of all farms in Iowa will be out of business. That's 11,000 farms, a displacement of 60,000 people from the countryside."

"You've got low prices, high interest rates, high production costs and continually declining net worth," Ostendorf said. "In the past 12 months land values have dropped by 28 percent. We've got \$2,500-\$3,000 an acre land going for

CAMPAIGN

\$1,500. Now the pressure is building quietly to open up Iowa farmland for outside, corporate investment. We're in the thick of a fight over who's going to control the land in this country."

As a result of this drastic deflation of land values, Harkin argued to the Des Moines Rotary Club, many farmers are paying real interest rates of 25 percent while corporations get tax breaks for non-productive mergers and shifting of jobs overseas. The ripple effect is immediate on both the small towns and the farm implement manufacturers in the state.

Although support from farmers has see-sawed back and forth, as it has with the overall poll totals, Harkin's campaign now sees him as leading among farm households. "If we tie the farm vote, Jepsen loses," campaign manager John Frew said. Jepsen ads hit Harkin for supporting domestic content legislation for automobiles as enriching Detroit automakers while risking retaliation against U.S. grain sales. An Iowa State University survey last year showed farmers narrowly supporting such legislation, 52 to 48 percent. Frew said Harkin defends the legislation as a weapon to open up foreign markets; "farmers see that and understand." Despite his rural constituency, Harkin has been a strong supporter of labor and now gets its backing in return.

By all accounts Harkin led substantially last summer, when Jepsen was still explaining his brief membership in a sex club back in 1977 (apparently that escapade is now doing him little harm). But Jepsen started a series of hard-hitting negative ads in early September while the Harkin campaign was running soft "Who is Tom Harkin?" ads describing his background: son of a coal miner, Navy pilot in Vietnam (there has been a campaign contretemps over the candidates' portrayal of their military records), a "rags-to-riches" boy who believes in the old virtues.

By mid-September the Iowa poll of the *Des Moines Register* showed Harkin with a nine-point lead, although Harkin's polls showed a tie (largely through Jepsen picking up previously undecided votes). The latest Iowa poll from mid-October shows Harkin leading 46 to 41 percent, with Harkin benefiting from reinvigorated Mondale support (the poll shows Mondale down eight points, a vast gain from the 23-point deficit in September). As the fight comes down to a final 10 percent—independents, moderate Republicans, rural people, working women and the elderly—the main issues will be, according to Frew: who has good judgment, who has courage of conviction and who is in tune with Iowa?

Besides his sex club caper, Jepsen has been involved in numerous weird episodes: tearing up tickets for driving in the Washington commuter lanes, putting his staff on a committee payroll, pressing the Pentagon to assign an officer to his staff, fighting import restrictions on green sea turtles (to help a German woman gynecologist he met who raises them), selling useless blindness insurance and more.

Jepsen's far-right views on prayer in school, the military and other issues are out of touch with Iowans. The problem, Harkin admits, is that many of those people—for reasons he cannot figure out—are still with Jepsen. Although an advisor told him many voters are "just waiting to fall in love with you," Harkin

Continued on page 7

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By Geoffrey Rips

AUSTIN, TX

THE PROBLEM FACING LLOYD Doggett in the U.S. Senate election in Texas is how to convince a large enough segment of a traditionally conservative Democratic power base to support his candidacy. He must combine that vote with his support from labor, black and Hispanic voters. But that does not seem like an impossible proposition. His opponent, Phil Gramm, is rated by the *National Journal* as the most conservative of the 435 members of Congress. And Lloyd Doggett, for all his progressive social stands, is not an economic reformer.

Large amounts of conservative PAC and oil money are flooding the state on behalf of Republican Gramm, making it difficult for Doggett to get the message of Gramm's supply-side extremism heard through the din of his opponent's media barrage. Gramm's campaign uses all the buzzwords of the New Right—school prayer, the right to life, family values—to obfuscate economic and foreign policy issues.

Like Doggett's runoff opponent in the Democratic primary, Rep. Kent Hance, Phil Gramm's hardest punches have come in a statewide radio campaign attacking Doggett's support for gay rights. But Gramm did not learn the technique from Hance. His political career has been marked by cheap shots, ridicule of the powerless and the baiting of opponents.

Gramm first came into statewide prominence as an opponent of incumbent Senator Lloyd Bentsen in the 1976 Democratic primary. During the spring of 1976, Bentsen, a conservative Democrat, was trying to run two campaigns—one for the presidency and another for re-election to the Senate from Texas. While Bentsen's presidential bid was relatively short-lived, it did give Gramm the opportunity to ac-

The conventional wisdom in Texas holds that Democrat Lloyd Doggett can win if Mondale loses by no more than 10 percent.

CAMPAIGN

cuse Bentsen of playing to two constituencies: a liberal Eastern establishment vote and a conservative Texas vote.

Gramm called Bentsen "two-faced" and "liberal," charges that now provide all the motivation Bentsen needs for pitching in with considerable financial and public relations support for Doggett in the current contest. As chair of the Senate Democratic Campaign Committee, Bentsen has made \$50,000 to Doggett's campaign. He has also agreed to appear in commercials on the campaign trail with Doggett, a man he is often at ideological odds with.

Gramm's fortunes changed with the 1978 retirement of Rep. Olin Teague from the state's sixth district, which includes Texas A&M University, where Gramm taught economics. Gramm won the Democratic primary and the election in this conservative district, which runs from bedroom communities south of Dallas to bedroom communities northwest of Houston. In Congress Gramm immediately joined forces with Jack Kemp and David Stockman in calling for social-spending and tax cuts. He was also a leader among Democrats voting against

ELECTIONS

Texas Senate race: David vs. Goliath



Democrat Senate candidate Lloyd Doggett (above) is campaigning against the most conservative of the 435 members of Congress.

Carter administration initiatives.

But it was with the election of Ronald Reagan that Phil Gramm came into his own. He became the ideological force behind the Boll Weevil revolt of Southern Democrat members of Congress supporting Reagan's tax cuts and budget package. This happened despite the fact that Gramm had promised the Democratic leadership he would vote with them if appointed to the House Budget Committee. Gramm instead used his committee post to team with Delbert Latta (R-OH). Together they authored the so-called Gramm-Latta Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1981, which included \$6.6 billion more in spending cuts than Reagan was requesting. In his notorious *Atlantic Monthly* article, David Stockman identified Gramm as the administration's "spy" on the Budget Committee.

In 1981 Gramm scored a 99 percent voting rating with the Conservative Coalition, the only Democrat to do so. His votes included one against a resolution by House Majority Leader Jim Wright urging that necessary steps be taken to insure that Social Security benefits not be reduced for those already receiving them. It passed, 404-13.

While barnstorming his district in 1981, Gramm referred to a *Dallas Morning News* article about a family rationing its food to avoid hunger. "Did you see the picture?" he asked the crowd in a small-town civic center. "Here are these people who are skimping to avoid hunger, and they are all fat!" he laughed. "In fact, in an unguarded moment, this picture induced me to point out the other day that because of the perverse impact of food stamps where we force people to buy food when, given a choice, they would choose to spend the aid we give them on other things, that we're the only nation in

the world where all our poor people are fat."

In the eyes of the Democratic leadership, Gramm had, in the words of Gillis Long (D-LA), "abused his responsibility and his trust" with his supply-side leadership. Gramm switched parties in late 1982 and had outgoing Republican Texas Gov. Bill Clements declare a special election in his district. Gramm outspent and outran his opponents, former Democratic state representative Dan Kubiak, who had labor support, and humorist John Henry Faulk, a victim of McCarthyism in the '50s and early '60s who was using the campaign to promote a nuclear weapons freeze.

In 1983 Gramm also attacked Rep. Albert Gore Jr. for voting against a Gramm amendment prohibiting the distribution of International Monetary Fund money to "communist dictatorships." In a press release distributed in Gore's Tennessee district, Gramm said, "In this vote, we had a clear choice—prevent the hard-earned money of the working people of this country from going to Communist dictatorships or support Communism. Obviously Albert Gore chose to support Communism rather than the people of this country."

Gramm's 1984 campaign is no different. He rails against welfare chiselers and freeloaders. He has campaigned across the state with a photograph he claims to be a picture of Doggett accepting a campaign contribution raised by a gay group from a male strip show. The photograph actually shows him receiving a campaign contribution from a gay rights organization and was published several weeks before the strip show in question took place. The strip show was performed at a gay club in San Antonio, and the proceeds were sent to Doggett, who returned

them post-haste, issuing a statement that he would not accept funds from any such demeaning entertainment, male or female.

Gramm, nevertheless, has persisted with his campaign, which includes radio ads saying: "Doggett supports the 'gay rights' bill, which would give homosexuals special status before the law. It would make them eligible for affirmative-action hiring programs previously preserved only for minorities. Homosexual groups in San Antonio even had the poor taste to hold an all-male strip show to raise money for Doggett. Their magazine ran his picture taking their money."

In an attempt to mask his own extremism, Gramm has tried to paint Doggett as an "ultra-liberal" and, taking a cue from Doggett's Democratic opponents, has claimed that he, not Doggett, is in the Texas "mainstream." A Gramm radio spot proclaims: "Massachusetts does not need a third senator."

The Doggett campaign has come on slowly. Doggett spent the summer following the primary trying to raise money and to shore up support among the more conservative Democrats who had supported his primary opponents, Kent Hance and Bob Krueger. While Doggett was able to raise enough money to come through the primary with the smallest campaign deficit of the Democrats, he still trailed Gramm by a considerable margin. Among major Gramm contributors are members of the oil and gas industry. According to the Citizen-Labor Energy Coalition, Gramm has received more money—\$187,489—from oil and gas PACs than any other congressional candidate. Gramm's funding has enabled him to blanket the state with radio and TV ads since June, while Doggett has had to wait until September to begin his media campaign.

Corporate Philistines.

The thrust of the Doggett campaign has been to portray the race as a battle of David versus Gramm's Goliath, backed by the strength and money of large corporate Philistines. It is an idea that suits Doggett's record in the Texas senate, where he was a leader for consumer and worker interests, authored legislation making state agencies accountable by requiring them to renew their charters on a regular, rotating basis and sponsored a bill establishing a state Human Rights Commission.

While Gramm portrays Doggett as anti-business, the truth is that Doggett, a lawyer and a business major when attending the University of Texas, has introduced several bills regulating large corporations in order to protect and encourage smaller businesses. Doggett's problem in this campaign is that the David-and-Goliath representation does not seem to be capturing a public imagination inundated with Gramm ads about male strip shows.

The conventional wisdom in Texas holds that Doggett can win if Mondale loses by no more than 10 percentage points. Gramm is waving Reagan's coattails everywhere he runs. Doggett, on the other hand, has maintained some distance between Mondale and himself, appearing with Mondale and Ferraro at an Austin rally at the state capitol but not playing a prominent role in the Mondale campaign in Texas. Doggett has also been trying to ease himself toward what he perceives to be the political middle, saying he supports right-to-work legislation and opposes gun control.

He has courted and received the support of Bob Strauss as well as of former Ambassador Ed Clark, a Lyndon Johnson confidante who had recently supported John Tower. House Majority Leader Jim Wright, who harbors a raging antipathy for Gramm, has helped Doggett raise money and support. One month before the election, private polls indicated Mondale trailed Reagan in the state by about 16 percent while Doggett trailed Gramm by 4-8 percent.

But these percentages may not accurately reflect the newly registered voting population in Texas. The Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project estimates that it has helped register close to one million new voters in Texas since the

2 election. Most of these potential voters are Mexican-American, make less than the median income of the state and live in urban areas or in the Lower Rio Grande Valley bordering on Mexico.

Voters in those categories gave Lloyd Doggett 75 percent of their vote in the Democratic runoff, and they will be the key to a Doggett, or Mondale, victory in November. The Industrial Areas Foundation community organizations throughout the state pledge that they will turn out half of the 104,000 new voters they have registered since January 1.

While the Republican Party has mounted a voter registration campaign of its own, largely through Christian evangelical campaigns, it has been far outdistanced by nonpartisan efforts that will undoubtedly benefit Democrats. In 1978, Democrat Bob Krueger lost to John Tower by a mere 12,000 votes. Democrat Mark White upset incumbent Gov. Bill Clements in 1982 by 230,000 votes. There may be 500,000 new voters participating in the November election. Jesse Jackson and Sen. Edward Kennedy have recently visited black and Hispanic urban areas in an effort to generate this vote for Doggett and Mondale.

Meanwhile, a large segment of the Texas population with rural and Democratic roots is waiting out this campaign. They will vote for Phil Gramm—and Ronald Reagan, for that matter—unless they perceive the race tightening up and see support for Doggett or Mondale as a viable position to take.

Mondale can turn both elections around with a sudden surge. And Doggett can turn his own election around with last-minute pyrotechnics in either his October 18 televised debate with Gramm or in his escalating ad campaign.

Members of the state's traditionally conservative, Democratic middle—who controlled the state for four decades until the election of a progressive slate in 1982—are anticipating the power shift. And when it shifts, they want to be on the winning side.

Geoffrey Rips is editor of the *Texas Observer*.

Salvador

Continued from page 3

one observer just before Duarte unveiled his peace offer.

Some Christian Democratic Party members, labor officials, priests and nuns had been meeting weekly for several months in a group called the Permanent Committee for Peace.

Analysts here point out that the Salvadoran people, tired of fighting and bloodshed, have begun to speak out more forcibly in favor of peace negotiations, overcoming fears of right-wing extremists who denounce any negotiations as virtual

treason. A poll conducted by a San Salvador radio station, *Radio Sonora*, found a four-to-one ratio in favor of the La Palma meeting and a strong sentiment for peace. Another poll found 78 percent of the population supporting the results of the La Palma meeting.

The analysts say that one of the goals of Duarte's initiative may have been to regain the image he created during the election, when he campaigned on a broad but ill-defined promise to seek "national reconciliation." Another, they added, may be to take away the issue of peace from the grassroots groups that have started taking their own initiative.

In this way, the analysts say, Duarte could reassert his control over the peace process and make certain it doesn't go in directions he doesn't support.

tional standards.

Harkin's economic policy mixes a critique of Keynesian solutions to current problems with an advocacy of a budget freeze, a modified flat tax, "pay-as-you-go" budgeting, tax indexing and a constitutional amendment requiring the president to submit a balanced budget. He attacks the unmodified monetarism of the Federal Reserve and current tax and credit policies toward big corporations. He favors a farm program that targets support to family farms and restricts production to raise prices and restore profit so that small farms can survive.

Several years ago a friend of Texas agriculture commissioner Jim Hightower suggested that Harkin read Lawrence Goodwyn's *The Populist Moment*. Harkin found a new identity and later started the populist caucus in Congress. He avoids the liberal label "because the opposition—I refuse to call them conservatives—has succeeded in defining what a liberal is. I am not going to be their definition of a liberal. Their definition is a big spender, soft on Communism, soft on defense, pro-abortion, pro-homosexual—all that kind of junk."

And populism? "Substantively, it's talking about those issues and concerns that really do affect people's daily lives,"

he said as we drove across the fogged-in Iowa countryside to Ottumwa. "But talking about it in a way the average person understands. My argument with traditional liberals is that they have sat by for 30 years and watched all the gains we have made through the application of populist principles erode and thought just by patching it up we'd be okay."

"About 1950 the income tax was fairly progressive," he continued, "and people paid their fair share. More and more special interests came in and found they could manipulate the tax code. The liberals didn't do anything. [They said], 'If the tax code is being eroded, if people are being hurt, then we'll come up with welfare schemes to take care of them. Unemployment's going up? We won't really have a good jobs program. We'll have unemployment compensation.'"

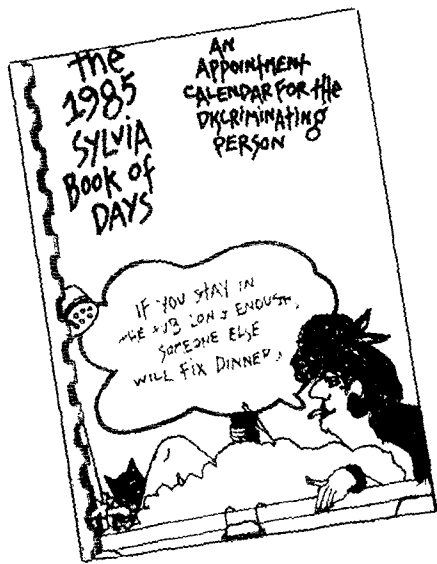
Yet Reagan has portrayed himself as friend of the little guy and made the enemy big government. How can Democrats confront that?"

"With great difficulty," Harkin admitted. "Populists in the old days said, 'You're suffering, you're hurting, you're going out of business, losing your farms because the big boys are taking you over, and government is sitting on its ass not doing anything. Now you've got to get government to protect you, to act on your behalf.' Populists of today ought to say, 'Government is your enemy. You know why? Because, goddamnit, it's owned lock, stock and barrel by the big guys. Now you kick them out and the government could be your friend. Now you've got to take it back.' I'd like to hear some Democrats talking in those terms."

Harkin talks in those terms himself at times, calling for the resignation of Agriculture Secretary John Block, a wealthy farmer with big landholdings, and for the appointment of Texas populist Jim Hightower.

"People want to vote for someone who they think is one of them, who they can trust, who won't embarrass them," Harkin said, summing up what he thought the election may hinge on.

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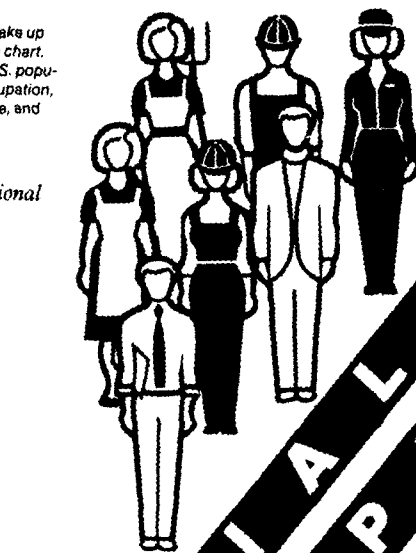
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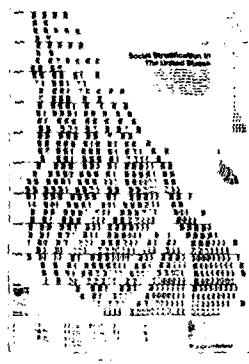
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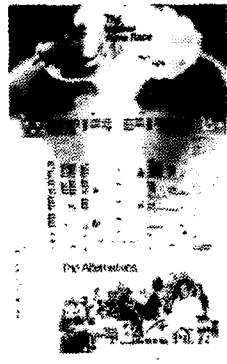


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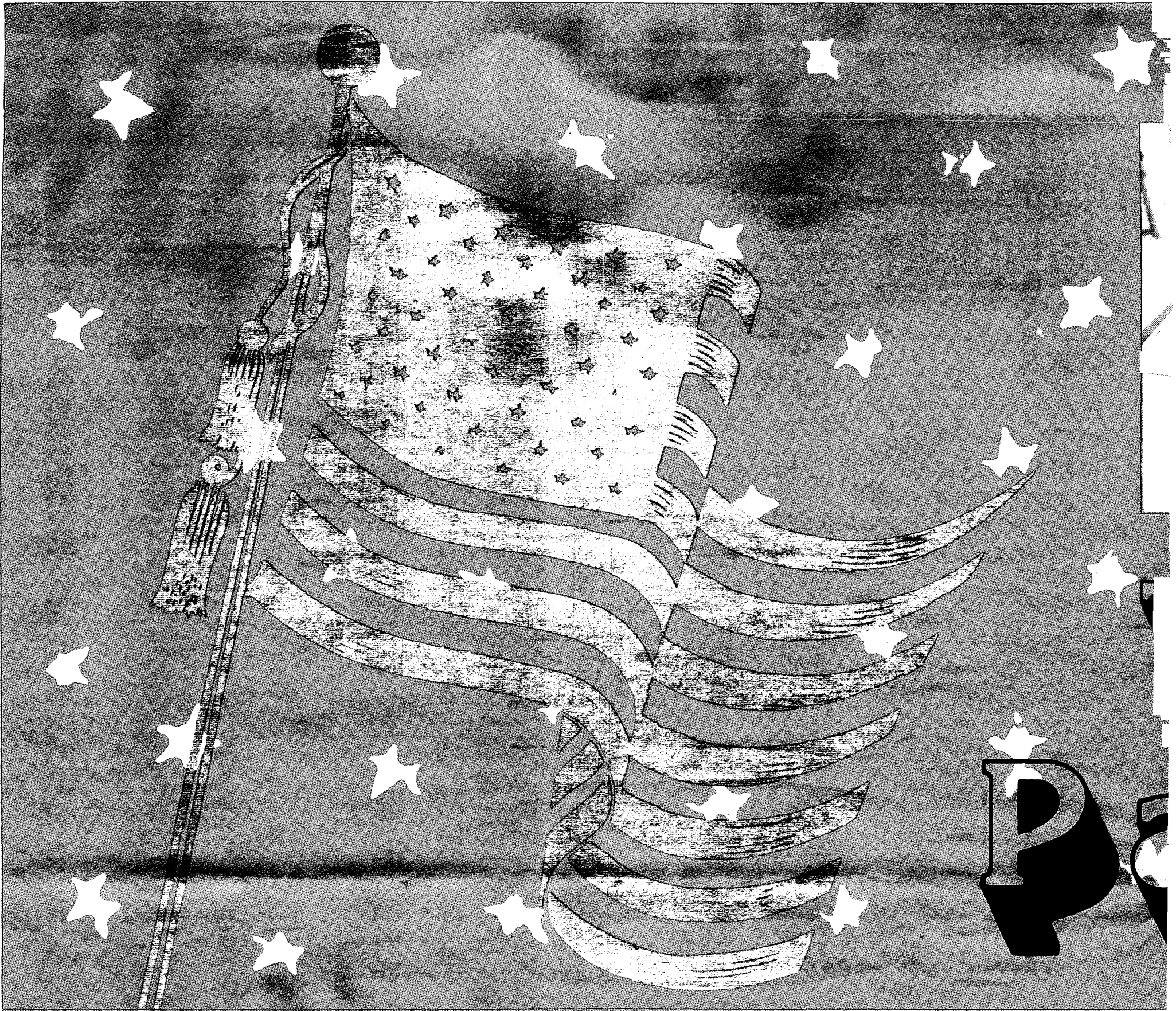
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By Salim Muwakkil

THE NEW, MEDIA-FED MOOD OF patriotism that is sweeping the country has Conrad Worrill worried. When Ronald Reagan declares "America is back," Worrill feels no thrill.

"This so-called new patriotism is really no different from the old patriotism," he contends, "and both of them represent the forces of reaction."

Worrill, who is the national secretary of the Black United Front (BUF), argues that this new national mood "is simply the re-emergence of something that's existed all along in this country. It's the same kind of patriotism exhibited by the Klan—anti-poor, anti-black, anti-government, pro-military, pro-imperialism. But instead of white sheets, these modern-day patriots are wrapping themselves up in the American flag."

He believes the forces of reaction are promoting this "neo-jingoism" to help lay the foundation for new and blatant expressions of white supremacy and racial demagoguery.

"Ronald Reagan is using this manufactured patriotism to give some very subtle codes to white America," says Monroe Anderson, one of the two black columnists at the *Chicago Tribune*.

"The essence of his message is that it's okay again to be a racist. White superiority is 'in' once again. How else can you explain why a white, blue-collar worker could be for Reagan?" Anderson asks. "The only way to make sense of that is to understand that Reagan appeals to them on another level. This new patriotism is actually a code word for racism-as-usual."

These two may seem to be overstating

the case, but according to several recent polls their views are reflected in much of the African-American community. Blacks clearly do not feel as good about this country as do whites.

A Gallup poll commissioned by the Joint Center for Political Studies (a black-oriented think tank) found that 79 percent of the blacks questioned were dissatisfied with the state of the U.S.; 67 percent said Reagan's reign has left them either the same or worse off than they were.

"Blacks are less likely to fall for all this patriotism bullshit because all they have to do is look at the facts of their lives," notes Nate Clay, editor of the *Chicago Metro-News*, a highly respected black weekly. "When they look around them and see that things are not all they are projected to be by the media, when they

see the unemployment rate is still high, when they see no trace of a recovery, how can they believe the flowery stories of the patriotism pushers?"

"When Reagan talks about traditional American values, blacks know that racism is one of America's most traditional values," Clay explains.

A recently released study by the non-partisan Center on Budget and Public Priorities concluded that the Reagan administration's policies have devastated poor blacks and threatens the precarious position of the black middle class.

The report's major findings are:

- The average black family in every economic stratum suffered a decline in its disposable income and standard of living since 1980. Hardest hit were two-parent families where one parent works and the other takes care of children.
- From 1980 to 1983 the income of the typical black family fell 5.3 percent after allowing for inflation.
- Nearly 36 percent of all blacks lived in poverty in 1983, the highest black poverty rate since the Census Bureau began collecting racially specific data. Almost 50 percent of all black children are listed as poor.
- From 1980 to 1983, an additional 1.3 million blacks became poor.
- Black unemployment, at 16 percent, is significantly higher than the 14.4 percent it was when Reagan took office. Long-term black unemployment is up 72 percent.

"For the first time in recent years in this country, we are pursuing policies that actually make black Americans worse off economically and divide them further from white America," said Robert Greenstein, the center's director.

Nearly 50 percent of all black children are poor.

That growing economic division has apparently affected social perceptions. The Joint Center's poll shows that 68 percent of the whites surveyed believe that blacks are better off than they were before Reagan. And while only 14 percent of the blacks polled were satisfied with things in this country, 48 percent of the whites were quite satisfied.

But not all blacks view this new patriotism as an ominous development.

"I don't have any trust in those so-called polls," says Walid Rahman, an executive at a federal agency and a member of the American Muslim Mission (AMM). "Most of the African-Americans I know are happy about this new feeling of patriotism and they feel much better about this country."

"Of course, you'll always have those civil rights and black nationalists—those people who make their living off of peddling misery and promoting dissatisfaction—who will find something negative in patriotic feelings. But they find something negative in anything. Most mature Americans are grateful that their countrymen are once again feeling good about their country."

The AMM is headed by Imam Warith Deen Muhammad, the son and successor of the late Elijah Muhammad. He has transformed his father's black-nationalist cult into a group that is well-respected by the Islamic world. For several months Imam Muhammad has hinted he may endorse Ronald Reagan's re-election and many of his followers have got the hint. Just last month Muhammad Ali endorsed Reagan and praised the new patriotism.

"In many ways, the Imam (Muhammad) foreshadowed this new feeling of patriotism," Rahman said. "We've been celebrating 'New World Patriotism Day' since 1977, and each year the crowds at



Paul Comstock



Photographer unknown

Is it a code word
for racism as usual?

The New Patriotism

our annual parade have gotten larger and larger."

Olympics: another Grenada.

John MacAloon is a cultural anthropologist who for several years has been studying cultures by examining their response to the Olympics. In his view, the Olympic Games offer a revealing glimpse into a nation's psyche. "I see a Rorschach test in which we create images of what we want ourselves to be," MacAloon told *In These Times*.

The University of Chicago associate professor believes that the fervid expressions of patriotism displayed during the Los Angeles games were fueled by something much deeper than home-town partisanship.

"The Olympics were like Grenada number two," MacAloon explains. "Our major opponents weren't there, so we demolished the weakest, declared ourselves the greatest and trumpeted our achievement. Reagan's attempt to claim this hollow, superficial kind of patriotism as his own is what concerns those who charge him with exploiting these national feelings both for his political benefit and to avoid facing the complexities of the world.

"For example," MacAloon notes, "in the closing paragraph of Reagan's acceptance speech he makes reference to the passing of the Olympic torch. It was an ironic reference because there was almost no torch. Greek officials had to call out the army to ensure that the torch made it to this country. There was great controversy and protest in Greece about how the Olympic flame was being used for political purposes in this country. Reagan never mentioned that controversy in his speech."

MacAloon acknowledges the need for

feeling good about one's country, but he finds indications "that aspects of this new patriotism are the most shallow, high-school variety."

That is almost the same description provided by John Henry Faulk, a former radio journalist for CBS. "This carefully orchestrated spirit of patriotism is more like a football pep rally than true patriotism," Faulk told *Nightline*'s Ted Koppel. A victim of black-listing during the McCarthy era, he knows firsthand what can happen when patriotism is orchestrated and politically exploited.

"This evoking of mindless, flag-waving patriotism is not only claptrap and nonsense, it is also dangerous. I see strong similarities between now and the McCarthy period."

For Faulk, patriotism is personal, like religion. He thinks a danger signal should flash when official attempts are made to orchestrate or somehow prescribe patriotic expressions.

The Rev. Willie Barrow, acting chief of Operation Push, sees the danger signal, but she believes Americans, inspired by the political emergence of blacks, have become much too aware to allow the more dangerous aspects of patriotism to surface.

"The campaigns of Jesse Jackson and Harold Washington and others around the country have given black people and other parts of the Rainbow Coalition new feelings of patriotism as well. We're beginning to feel that we can affect the system and move this country into a progressive direction. We see that we have strong leadership in this country, and we won't let anything just roll over us. This new patriotism means us, too, and we mean to claim it."

To some, Barrow's embrace of U.S. patriotism may seem a bit eccentric. But

despite a history pockmarked by racial oppression, many black Americans feel a fierce sense of patriotism about this country. Sometimes it's expressed in the most incongruous contexts.

Patriotism as a shield.

"Flip" is the type of guy most people tend to avoid. Swaggering and surly, he is a bonafide member of the black underclass. Like many of his peers he proudly calls himself a "player." Translated, that means a petty, gutter-level criminal. Flip and his friends frequently boast about their various criminal activities.

"I like Reagan 'cause he's forcing all these niggahs to get their asses off welfare," Flip told *In These Times* in a recent interview. "I know a whole goddam block where just about everybody is on aid. At the end of the month, on payday, you'll find a whole bunch of niggahs lining up to get some money from their ladies. It's a goddam shame, man. How we gon' call ourselves men if we depend on our ladies to take care of us?"

Flip feels no connection to the new patriotism. "All these muhfuckas who live off welfare should be the ones who are patriotic. They should love this government, 'cause it's taking care of them from crib to coffin. I don't give a fuck about patriotism 'cause it don't mean nothing to me. I make my money the way I make it no matter what the politicians talk about."

According to Nate Clay, Reaganomic policies are responsible for churning out thousands of unemployed black males who, like Flip, survive by preying on the vulnerabilities of the black community, transforming some neighborhoods into crime-infested wastelands. "The Reagan

Black youth unemployment approaches 60 percent.

administration is using patriotism and all of this emotional fervor to shield Americans' eyes from the very serious problems that exist in this country," Clay argues.

"The only kind of patriotism that can be relevant for us is the kind that will motivate us to develop our own communities. We must come up with a grand plan to help the masses free themselves or we will be recycled. Either we do that or, as far as I can see, we will be wiped out."

Clay says that those blacks who feel affinities with Reagan's anti-welfare sentiments are missing the point. Sure, he notes, some of the more enterprising and talented blacks may make it without federal assistance. But what about those stuck on the bottom who are being ravaged by Reagan's policies? He predicts that they will haunt black communities, like so many Flips, until somebody declares war on them.

Who will be the patriots then? Clay wonders.



Plan Dealer

PERSPECTIVES

Europeans all ask the same question

By David Corn

IN A BAR IN YORK, ENGLAND, this August, while punks with purple Mohawks knocked elbows with British yuppies, an arch-supporter of Margaret Thatcher, with a tone of disbelief in his voice asked me: "Are you Americans really going to re-elect Reagan?" Shortly after that, beach bums I met in Nice, France, demanded an answer to the same question. In fact, during a recent trip I took through several European states, that question repeatedly reared its foul, vacation-spoiling head. There was no escaping it.

On a train in Italy, a young woman from Yugoslavia asked if Reagan's victory was guaranteed. She couldn't believe it, nor did she want to. (She also asked if it was true that in the U.S. we use Coca-Cola to clean floors.) In Budapest, an independent peace activist was amazed to find that European press reports predicting a Reagan romp were not exaggerations. And in a London dance hall, new wave songster Elvis Costello inquired of the American members of his audience (quite a substantial lot): "Why are you going to re-elect Reagan?"

It is difficult and embarrassing to explain to an outsider. Yes, Americans did hear the one about bombing the Soviet Union. Yes, they have read that the president falls asleep during cabinet meetings. Yes, they are concerned—if polls can be believed—with the deficit, the arms race and the prospect of greater U.S. military involvement in Central America. Nevertheless, I would add, Americans seem to like this amiable but tough guy, and the substance of most campaign issues—particularly those relating to foreign policy—remain distant from the debate.

What seems most to raise the ire of the small (and unscientific) sampling of Reagan detractors I encountered throughout Europe is the president's cavalier attitude and his penchant for reducing all issues to simple-minded blacks and whites. When one travels across the continent, it is easy to understand why this galls Europeans.

Unlike Americans, Europeans in East and West live in close proximity the the consequences of the last superpower war. They confront the remains—living and dead. Half of Berlin exists as a Western island in an Eastern sea. The war and its aftermath are present in living memory. Physical reminders still stand. There is the Wall, covered with adolescent graffiti on the Western side, a stark, unapproachable white barrier on the other side. Dachau and other concentration camps attract hordes of tourists. Sections of East Berlin and Budapest look as if the war ended only five years ago. Buildings pockmarked by gunshots and explosions stand unrepaired, left that way purposefully—and perhaps cynically—by governments in order to keep the memory alive. In London, plaques mark theaters, banks and other buildings hit during the Battle of London. Small towns in France boast war memorials commemorating the deaths of local heroes. Compare this to the U.S. How many of us can look at such a memorial and recall a direct, personal loss? In Europe, these reminders all add up, to borrow Theodore Draper's phrase, to a "present history."

Untouched by this history, Americans accept a worldview that is shaped by Cold War mythology, one that is hard for many Western Europeans to fathom. For them, the Soviet Union is not an "evil empire." Despite its ills and misconduct, it is a neighbor that must be lived with. It is not a bogey or that sinister "other." And we Americans must seem brash and immature when we endorse a crusading president who displays personal fantasies with jokes about nuclear war. When the story of the joke broke, I was in Great Britain and was asked by several British journalists if this would spell Reagan's defeat. When I told them probably not, they could not understand.

But in the U.S., public opinion surveys show that while Americans are made uneasy by deteriorating U.S.-Soviet relations, when push comes to shove they prefer an aggressive approach to the Soviet Union, rather than one aimed at accommodation. Thus Reagan—who loses some points for trigger-happiness—scores

REAGAN SPEAKS OUT ON THE ISSUES...

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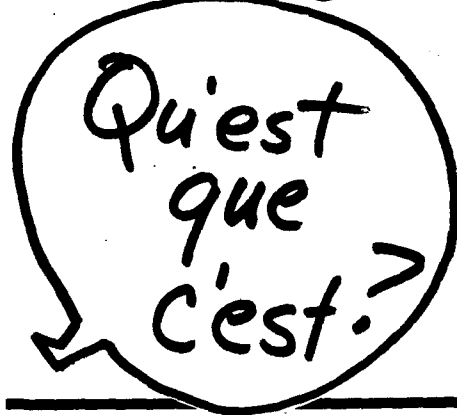


JOBS...



ROTHCO

From beach bums in Nice to peace activists in Budapest, none can understand how Americans can possibly again vote for Ronald Reagan.



high marks for his so-called leadership ability in foreign affairs and for increasing U.S. standing in the world, certainly code phrases for dealing with the Soviets.

European incredulity.

"How does he do it?" I was asked. Though plenty of rabid anti-Soviet partisans can be found on both sides of the Atlantic, Europeans in my sampling marvelled at the degree to which fear and paranoia fuels American foreign policy. But this is not surprising, given the images Americans associate with East Europe and the Soviet Union. Upon my return, I confronted on a personal scale the stereotypes exploited by Cold War warriors. Just mention to someone that you have been to East Germany, Hungary and (even) Yugoslavia, and the following questions emerge: How many soldiers did you see? Are there police everywhere? Were you followed or harassed? Did you have any trouble getting out? The notion of being a tourist in these states was baf-

fling for some. "Why go there?" I was asked.

Further conversation would often reveal the Hollywood-stock images of a gray, dismal East, populated primarily by police and military and a few downtrodden civilians, where Americans are in danger. I was even asked if the countryside changed once you passed behind the Iron Curtain, going from Austria to Hungary, as if the rolling fields and green woods immediately change into rubble and barren land—and a permanent cloud cover descends.

But to disabuse these ill-founded notions should not be equated with apology. There is nothing that makes one feel more the self-righteous democrat than to stand on the western side of the Wall and gaze at the armed sentries in the tower on the other side. Simply put, we have our own set of problems, and they have theirs. But viewed through European eyes—especially during this electoral season—a most serious problem for us is the way we form the operative assumptions that underlie the creation of U.S. foreign policy. Looking at this process from the other side of the Atlantic, it seems to take place in a historical vacuum, divorced from reality. It is based on a Cold War mythology that carries less weight in Western Europe. Many Europeans naturally find this worrisome.

Reagan is a great believer in myth and a professional when it comes to turning it into policy. What is particularly saddening is to have to explain to anxious Europeans that he represents not an aberration, but an extension of a significant pool of political feeling in this country. After all, it is no secret that Cold War sentiment is deeply embedded in our political culture. When viewed from a European vantage, it appears even more dangerous. And I harbor the sneaky suspicion that many within the anti-Reagan forces, ranging from the Mondale campaign to the various segments of the peace movement, probably underestimate its influence. Though the Soviets do not make the task any easier, to undermine the Cold War mythology is the real challenge.

Now, in the time left, Reagan can be assailed for his lack of competence in office and his inability to act as our nuclear steward for four more years. Those are relatively easy targets. But it should be kept in mind that a more sophisticated Cold Warrior could be even harder to tackle. They are not all strategic novices and so openly provocative. Whether Reagan is with us after November 6 or not, the mythology will still be here, ready to be tapped yet again.

But for my York inquisitor, the honest answer remains, "Yes, it looks likely." It was not the answer he wanted to hear, but then neither was it the message I wanted to deliver. His response was straight-forward: "Well, you know what you're getting, so you get what you deserve." It was difficult to argue with that.

David Corn is a contributing editor of *Nuclear Times*.

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By James North

THE FIRST PEOPLE I MET in Nicaragua this time were two middle-aged men with long faces. I was in the little town of Somoto, after just having crossed the tense border from neighboring Honduras. They were upset at the national baseball team's devastating 19-to-1 loss to Japan the night before at the Los Angeles Olympics. One of them, a thin, animated man named Ramon, brightened when he learned I was from Chicago. "Nicaragua still has a chance," he said. "After all, the Dodgers lost the first game of the '59 Series to your White Sox 11-to-0, but they recovered and went on to win in six games."

After further astonishing me with their knowledge of *Las Ligas Grandes* (the big leagues), Ramon and his friend Jose, both of whom were schoolteachers, turned to more serious matters. Ramon posed his own question and answered it. "How is Nicaragua today? *Bueno*, if you go into the shops, there will be shortages. You may not be able to find everything you want."

He shrugged. "But the *campesino* can read and write now. He has land of his own now." Ramon paused again. "When he works in the fields, he carries a gun with him. He will fight to protect Free Nicaragua."

The teachers explained that they had been supervisors in the national literacy campaign that took place after the Sandinista Front liberated the country in 1979. They remained in Somoto, despite the danger from the U.S.-backed contras based just over the border in Honduras. They wanted to help defend Nicaragua

the townspeople to remain indoors. The next morning he and his neighbors emerged—to find that the contras had left the bodies of eight villagers scattered about. They had cut the throats of their victims. One of the dead was Pedro Lopez' second son.

The contras had also kidnapped several youths. Mrs. Amanda Perez stood in her tiny, smokey hut and told how they had taken her teenage son. She had a desperate, frightened gleam in her eye. As she spoke, her youngest child, an infant boy, started to bawl. One of his sisters tenderly cleaned off his face. He had vomited up a worm.

None of the traumatized townspeople understood how the contras had selected their victims. Mrs. Perez speculated that they might have been trying to carry out their pledge to disrupt the national elections, scheduled for November 4. "But we all registered," she said defiantly. "And we will all vote."

The revolution.

The central fact about Nicaragua today is that a clear majority of the people support the Sandinista Front and will vote for its candidates. The U.S.-sponsored covert war has not reduced that support, and may in fact have increased it. The election might be one of the few in history in which the winning side would find it politic to commit vote fraud in order to *reduce* its actual margin of victory. Too overwhelming a landslide could damage the credibility of the election in the U.S. and elsewhere.

Some critics of Nicaragua miss this reality entirely. They—most recently Robert Leiken in the *New Republic*—portray a country in which a small, authoritarian and increasingly corrupt elite is ruthlessly consolidating power while a

PERSPECTIVES

Nicaragua, a state of affairs that is worth fighting for

reason, that some of the opposition is linked to the violent contra insurgency. Then they ought to bring those they charge with guilt into an impartial court of law.

But what the critics forget is that the majority of Nicaraguans support the Sandinistas, and many endorse those oppressive measures. Some probably even wish the government would crack down harder. The *turbas*, the militant, chanting, pro-Sandinista masses who at times harass opposition leaders and demonstrate outside their rallies, are genuine grassroots movements, not rented crowds. This popular support in no way justifies government restrictions; minorities should always have the freedom to express their views. But the human rights problem in Nicaragua is quite different from the elite dictatorship the critics suggest exists there. And it will require a different solution.

Some critics also complain that the Sandinistas are "betraying" their

been promising enough to inspire large numbers of people. My friends the two teachers and Lieutenant Velasquez, people I met quite at random, are willing to change their lives in the interests of their country. Such people are exceedingly rare elsewhere, whether in the Third or the industrialized world.

Even in peacetime, the struggle to transform Nicaragua after decades of dictatorship would require dedication and near-military discipline. With the war and the continual threat of a U.S. invasion, the Sandinistas and their supporters have a tendency to be more humorless, more intolerant of any opposition. Older Japanese-Americans are not the only people who know that repression and victimization can flourish in the tense atmosphere of wartime.

The critics.

I have a sense that certain critics of Nicaragua, those who are (or were) liberals or on the left, fancy themselves as modern George Orwells, boldly speaking out against what they see as leftist orthodoxy. But they understand only a part of Orwell's message. He was certainly emphatic about human rights violations, even (or rather especially) when other leftists commit them. In that sense, those who criticize Nicaragua are right to imitate him.

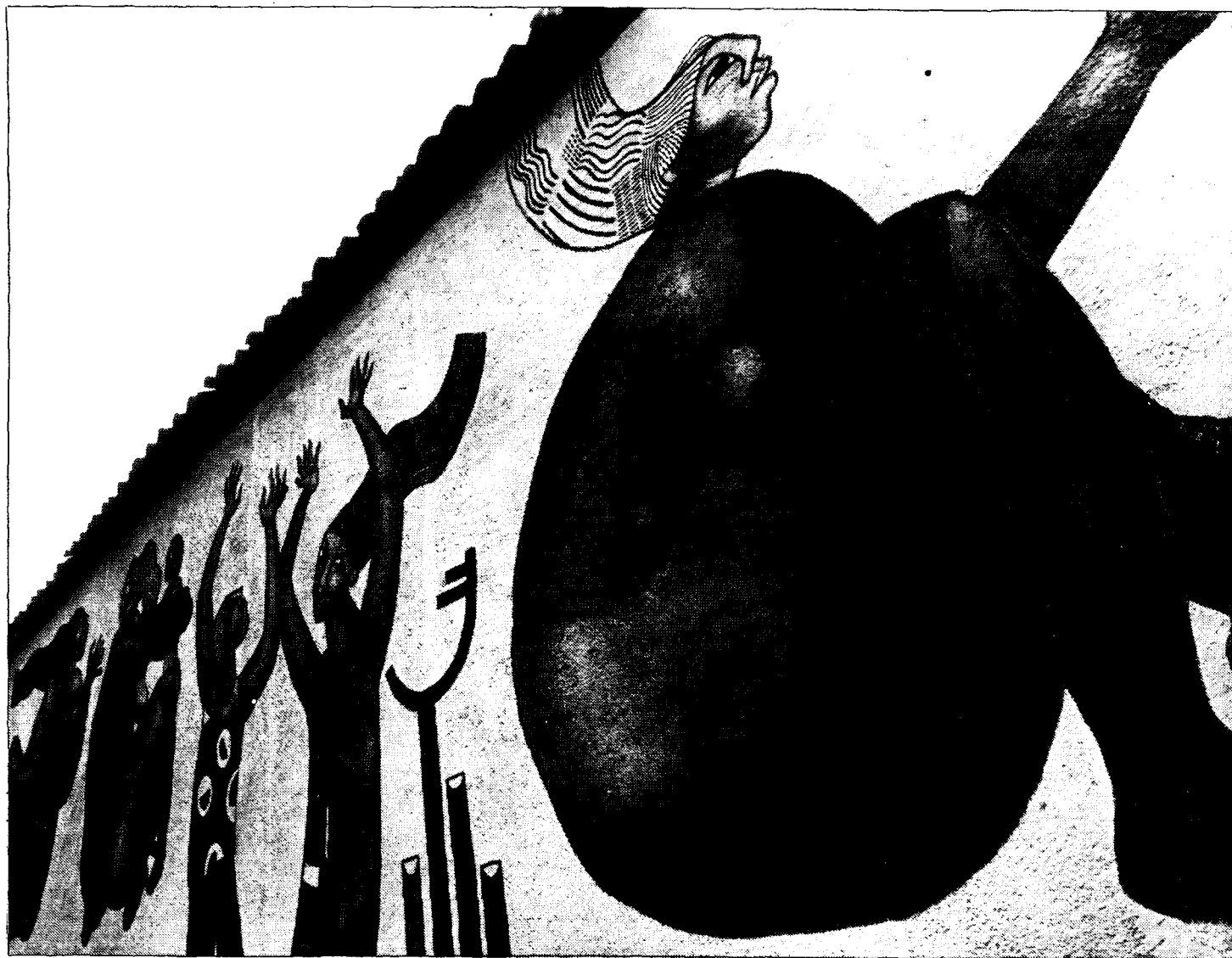
But Orwell also recognized that we live in an imperfect world, in which we are sometimes called upon to make difficult political judgments. He himself went to Spain in 1936 and fought bravely for the Republic against Franco and an earlier incarnation of the contras. The international Communist movement, in theory on the same side as Orwell, in fact slandered, imprisoned and even murdered his friends among the anarchist and independent left movements. Orwell did not hesitate to denounce Stalinism, which committed crimes far in excess of what even the most unfair critics of the Sandinistas have charged them with. But he continued to support the Spanish Republic, and he never regretted his part in defending it.

I would never argue that the pocket-sized Orwells of today should be silent about Nicaragua. (Although I strongly question the accuracy of an account like Leiken's.) But they ought to remember that much more is at stake here than their carefully cultivated reputations as iconoclasts. They ought to be more accurate and balanced in their writing, and they ought to have enough integrity to recognize the political choice the Reagan administration has imposed on us. A continuation of the contra attacks, or a U.S. invasion, are hardly the proper ways to bring about an improvement in the human rights situation.

No, Nicaragua is far from perfect. But despite its flaws, it is one of the most promising places I have seen in the six years I have spent in some 25 Third World nations. I would say of Free Nicaragua what Orwell said of revolutionary Spain 50 years ago: "There was much in it that I did not understand, in some ways I did not even like it, but I recognized it immediately as a state of affairs worth fighting for."

And he did.

James North was *In These Times*' South Africa correspondent. He recently returned from a three-month visit to Central America.



(Above) A mural in Managua dedicated to the literacy campaign that has been an inspiration to a great majority of the population to support the Sandinistas.

by educating its people.

A week or so later, I met another Nicaraguan who also chose to remain in the dangerous frontier region. Luis Velasquez, a personable 40-year-old lieutenant in the Sandinista army, was originally a carpenter in the capital of Managua. He had fought with the Sandinistas for 10 years; he might be presumed to have earned the right to shift to a more peaceful occupation. Instead, he volunteered to stay in command of a small outpost in the Matagalpa mountains, right at the front.

Just a few days earlier, a contra band had invaded the nearby hamlet of Tapasle. A stunned shopkeeper named Pedro Lopez described how they had ordered

sullen, frightened people are standing helplessly by. I honestly cannot see how Leiken and the others reach that conclusion. I have been in a half-dozen Third World countries that fit their lurid description (including Nicaragua under the Somoza dictatorship 10 years ago). By contrast, Nicaragua today is extraordinarily open and relaxed, with a genuinely popular government.

This is not to say that there have been no human rights abuses. The intermittent press censorship is completely unacceptable. The government's efforts to control part of the union movement is also wrong. Certain restrictions on public meetings are similarly undemocratic. The Sandinistas argue, probably with good

"promise" to maintain "a mixed economy." To equate fundamental human rights of speech and assembly with the more dubious "right" to preserve an economic system that still has a majority sector of rural landlords and private business is glib and unacceptable. If the Nicaraguans want to replace private property with more agricultural cooperatives and worker-managed or worker-owned enterprises, these changes would more likely increase human rights rather than diminish them.

The majority of Nicaraguans continue to support the Sandinistas because they approve of the radical changes taking place. The land reform, literacy campaign and advances in health care have

PERSPECTIVES

Reagan's history of catering to special interests in the West

By Bob Gottlieb and Peter Wiley

I FROM THE OUTSET OF THE 1984 presidential election, the media and political pundits alike have predicted that Ronald Reagan would sweep the West. Recent polls indicate that Reagan maintains an impressive lead in nearly all the states west of the 100th meridian with the exception of Hawaii. The reason for this, according to Eastern observers, is that the West is conservative, anti-government and supportive of a macho foreign policy with its tough talk to the Russians. In this scenario, Ronald Reagan is the Western cowboy astride his stallion, riding through the land he and his supporters call Reagan country.

The reality is that Reagan's political pose is at odds with his actions, and his election year grandstanding masks his consistent support for a kind of big government intervention that has been an economic fact of life in the modern West.

Reagan's themes have essentially remained the same over the last 20 years. He decries the public sector, lashing out

at the role of the government, particularly in the area of social and human services. He lauds the spirit of individualism and entrepreneurialism and fantasizes about an era where the market reigns supreme, untrammelled by big government. Yet, once in office, Reagan has been an avid pump primer, pushing for greater military spending, more farm subsidies, particularly for his old friends in California agribusiness, and for the long-standing Western practice of promoting publicly subsidized water and energy projects that have laid the foundation for Western economic growth since World War II.

Reagan's career owes special thanks to a number of Western-based and Western-oriented interests that have long fed at the public trough which he has helped to fill. These include military-related companies such as Lockheed, Rockwell and Northrop; agribusiness giants like Tenneco, the Southern Pacific and the J.G. Boswell company; energy-based companies such as Union Oil and Southern California Edison; and the host of construction, development and financial companies that constitute the Western water industry.

Reagan's ties to Western agribusiness, for example, date back to his first years

as governor of California when he launched a war against Cesar Chavez' United Farmworkers and such publicly funded advocates of farmworker rights as California Rural Legal Assistance. More recently, his Payment in Kind farm subsidy program, though widely interpreted as a Midwest farm bailout, was strongly beneficial to Reagan's long-standing agribusiness allies in the West.

Similarly, Reagan's policies in the energy and water development areas have continued the long-standing Western practice of using the government to underwrite or facilitate the giant resource projects that have transformed the West. His leasing policies regarding coal development, offshore oil and mining in general reversed a decade of more restrictive policies and created a potential windfall for many of his resource-related friends. And in the area of water development, Reagan's long-time political confidant, Secretary of Interior William Clark, caboched James Watt's tentative pursuit of ways to reduce federal subsidies for the numerous Western water projects such as the Central Arizona Project and the Central Utah Project.

It is in the area of military expenditures that Reagan has pushed strongest for massive subsidies for the private sector. It is not simply a question of the large increases in the military budget, but Reagan's particular spending policies in favoring such expensive projects as the B-1 bomber, the MX and Trident missile systems, and the whole Star Wars space package. These programs have especially benefited such Reagan allies as Rockwell, Bechtel, Boeing and Lockheed.

Yet what is most fascinating is that Reagan can continue to maintain his anti-government posture in the midst of such massive public giveaways and spending policies. He is indeed a master of ideology—someone who promotes ideas that mask realities. There is a long tradition in Western politics of such successful ideological posturing. Senators Barry Goldwater and Paul Laxalt are other recent examples of government-baiting politicians who, at the same time, fight to keep alive the tradition of Western public subsidies.

Today, there are chinks in that ideology. Western water projects, for example, no longer have the automatic support they once did and agribusiness no longer calls all the shots in state legislatures and congressional delegations. More significantly, there has emerged a suspicion around big military projects, such as the MX. Nevertheless, Ronald Reagan manages to maintain his ideological shield, still confident that the West belongs to him.

II

Somehow the national leaders of the Democratic Party have missed one of the most significant trends in modern politics—the inexorable migration of people and power ever westward. The West never seems to fit into their strategies. As a result those who view the region from afar now describe the West as Solidly Republican, and most commentators agree that Walter Mondale's chances are at best marginal in a small number of Western States.

Until the Mondale campaign began looking at the decreasing number of states where he stands even a slight chance of winning, Mondale and Co. had written off the West in favor of an east of the Mississippi strategy that focuses on the Northeast, South and Midwest. Now Mondale will be making a push in the West, but more than likely with little avail.

It's not that the West is solidly Republican. There have been and still are numerous successful Democratic politicians in the West: Sen. Gary Hart, Rep. Patricia Schroeder and Gov. Richard Lamm of Colorado, Gov. Scott Matheson of Utah, Gov. John Evans and former Governor and Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus of Idaho, Gov. Bruce Babbitt and Rep. Morris Udall of Arizona, Rep. Tom Foley of Washington, Gov. Toney Anaya of New Mexico, and a whole host of Californians including former Gov. Jerry Brown, Assemblyman Willy Brown, Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley and Capitol Hill comer Rep. Tony Coelho.

These politicians represent a wide range of experience as well as political outlook. And many of them, such as Jerry Brown, Gary Hart and Morris Udall have already made their presence felt in national Democratic circles.

Why then has the West been so unresponsive to the fickle blandishments of the national Democratic leadership? For one thing, the West is geographically extensive and demographically complex. There are vast cultural distances between the Hispanic-influenced areas along the Mexican border and the mining and timber regions of northern Idaho, between the gambling dens of Las Vegas and the ranches of eastern Colorado, and even between the suburbs of Los Angeles and those of Salt Lake City.

Inherently Democratic issues, such as the environment and the rights of the West's different minorities, require a detailed understanding of how each constituency responds to them. In short, the West lacks the homogeneity that makes it responsive to the media-oriented blitzkriegs of contemporary politics.

A politician like Mondale who is battling against the odds needs a first-hand knowledge of these intricacies in order to address the problems of each constituency. And polling and other superficial but fashionable techniques won't provide it.

Then there is the Western suspicion of national centers of power, whether it be Washington or Wall Street—a suspicion born of a convoluted sense of independence and dependency. Mondale unfortunately is still associated with Washington and an administration that had very few beneficial contacts with the West.

In fact, four years later the Carter administration is still most remembered for its erratic water policies, which were savagely and at times unjustly attacked by the Western media, and for his concession in the 1980 election before the polls closed in several Western states.

Ultimately Mondale's problem is as much a national as a regional one. The Democratic Party is still living off of strategic notions and concepts of constituency generated during the social uprisings associated with the New Deal. The next great period of social unrest, the '60s, split the ranks of Democratic liberalism wide open.

As the turmoil of the '60s subsided, those who were oriented toward electoral politics learned to work with the Democratic Party. Some, like Gary Hart, even made the jump to party loyalty. But most of the leftists who reached political maturation in the '70s never overcame their original distrust of the party. This whole new generation of would-be Democrats learned instead when to use the party and when to go ahead without it.

The Republicans, too, have been significantly influenced by a new generation, most of them members of the New Right. More susceptible to notions of institutional authority, they gave the GOP a much-needed shot of adrenalin during its worst moments following the collapse of the Nixon administration. New Rightists, however, are as familiar as former '60s activists with the virtues and successes of extra-party politics. And it is only a matter of time before they see through the ways in which they are being used by the more centrist leaders of the GOP.

Meanwhile the Democrats are caught in the cross-currents of generational and regional conflicts that are likely to sweep them away from the White House again in 1984. Most of the successful Western politicians represent a new generation of Democrats. And Gary Hart's bid for the Democratic nomination indicates that the Democrats will have to face the realities of Western geopolitical power upon which the Republicans have capitalized so successfully.

Whether a new generation of Democratic leaders, many of the best from the West, will be able to overcome the liabilities of the past and ground themselves in the diverse constituencies and politics of a complex region will determine whether the myth of the Republican West can be laid to rest.

Bob Gottlieb and Peter Wiley write a regular column on Western affairs.

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Just as these autumn days are getting cooler, the holidays are getting closer. Often the seasons change so quickly that winter sets in before we're ready. The department stores fill up with shoppers and the commercial race will be on.

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Good Morning, Merry Sunshine:
A Father's Journal of His
Child's First Year
 By Bob Greene
 Atheneum, 320 pp., \$14.95

By Bob Gottlieb

The '80s are emerging as the era of the "new father." The movies are filled with scripts about changing roles and caring fathers. Numerous magazine articles detail personal accounts of daddy's derring-do and the new male values. A spate of new books about fathers and sons and fathers and daughters has been published by the book industry seeking to establish a new market.

Now we have the bestselling book by *Chicago Tribune* and *Esquire* columnist Bob Greene called *Good Morning, Merry Sunshine: A Father's Journal of his Child's First Year*. Greene's book is in its eighth printing, and with 100,000 copies sold, according to its publishers, it has indeed upped the ante in the fatherhood market.

The problem with nearly all these accounts, including Greene's, is that instead of complementing the feminist appeal for changing male and female roles particularly within the home, they only exacerbate some very old tensions. Today, Dad can have his cake and eat it too. He can play, relate, experience, enjoy his child's development leaps, while Mom gets the toil and trouble. Or, as Greene declares about the way "things are"—in today's new world, "Dad means fun; Mom means work."

Greene in some respects is the reluctant father who becomes an enthusiastic believer in these "fun" times. He is concerned in the beginning of his journal with the tensions between his new role as father and his workaholic identification with his career.

On the one hand, he enjoys observing his daughter's every-



day changes, transforming his journalist-observer role into parent-observer. On the other hand, some of the more passionate entries in the journal concern his work where he describes a particular story well done, especially those relating to his work for ABC's *Nightline* news program.

The ambivalence around career and parenting becomes most striking in a series of entries regarding a semi-aborted trip with wife Susan and daughter Amanda to his in-laws in Columbus, Ohio. Greene decides to take a one-week vacation—his one and only vacation during this year-

long odyssey—but on the night he arrives in Columbus, *Nightline* calls and asks him to go to Green Bay to do a piece on the football players' strike.

Greene hesitates, but then arranges what he considers a compromise. He will do the story but only if it's in Cleveland or Cincinnati, thus cutting down the time away from Susan and Amanda from four to two days. Then, once back in Columbus, he arranges to do some additional columns, including an interview that takes him away from the house one more time.

Greene, however, never sees

spending while glutting military spending.

Cutting budgets also helped to dispose of the most basic tool for guiding regulations—research. "Research must identify and verify hazards, design test instruments for safety standards, justify new regulatory proposals, help industries determine how to comply with regulations and design and adapt regulatory programs to be cost-effective," writes Claybrook.

Yet while the administration promotes cost/benefit analysis as a scale for weighing the value of a regulation, Claybrook points out that its use is very selective. Pentagon appropriations, business subsidies and the need for tax expenditures, for example, are not evaluated in the same way. Nor are the benefits of regulations to our health really considered. The

An agency-by-agency look at Reagan's regulatory record.

OMB worksheets do not even have a space for listing such benefits.

How much is a life worth? Each year 3.3 million workers are injured badly enough to require hospital treatment. At least 100,000 workers die each year from exposure to deadly chemi-

PARENTING

Can a daddy be a mommy?

the contradictions between parenting and work. He is content with his setup—the long hours away from home, then back to Amanda to see the early smiles, the first words, the first crawl. He enjoys his observer role and appears little concerned that parenting for him means play and observation, while for Susan it means work and drudgery.

Susan, after all, is the parent day in and day out. She is constantly on call for her child, while Greene is constantly on call for his newspaper column and his TV appearances. Susan takes care of the house, the food, the crying, the tensions of her pre-toddler all interwoven with the joy she also feels with being bonded to her baby. She is, as Greene puts it, the way mothers are and will always be.

Mom's career?

Susan, however, is not the traditional stay-at-home mother. Greene alludes to his wife's previous career, though he never specifies exactly what it is. In fact, she has a dream one day. Her husband has given away all her work clothes to one of the producers at *Nightline*. She argues that she wants her clothes, yet her husband insists that she won't need office clothes anymore but his producer friend will. "But I don't have to give her my peach gabardine suit, do I? That's my favorite," Susan pleads. To which Greene replies, "Yes. You don't need those clothes anymore. Betsy [the producer] has to get everything."

Greene relates the dream, but says nothing more about it. It hangs there, unpleasant, yet for Greene not serious enough to say or do anything about.

Ultimately, Greene's journal is about a traditional kind of parenting. Contemporary fathers can best be described as "absent" fathers, literally or figuratively. While studies have pointed out the reduction in time that working mothers spend with their children (though not necessarily quality time), the number of hours spent by fathers with their kids has either been reduced or remained the same. That's the strong sense you get about Greene's book, which is as much a book about Bob Greene the journalist and his observations, partly about his daughter, partly about himself.

It is most definitely not a book about co-parenting, where the equal give and take incorporates a new kind of father/mother role model, and where fathers take an active part in diapering and playing, in bonding and observing, in "mothering" as well as "fathering."

In the end, Greene falls back on that most traditional and exalted role for mom. According to Greene, she, after all, has been historically and culturally determined as the legitimate parent with dad in the background, watching and observing, but never quite there.

Bob Gottlieb, father of a one-year-old son, is co-author of *America's Saints: The Rise of Mormon Power*.

HEALTH

A catalog of catastrophe

Retreat From Safety: Reagan's Attack on America's Health
 By Joan Claybrook and the staff of Public Citizen
 Pantheon Books, 270 pp., \$8.95

By Paul Choitz

Ever since Ronald Reagan became president in 1981, he has attacked regulations with the bloody ferocity of a pelt hunter clubbing harp seal pups. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is disemboweled. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is badly wounded. The Consumer Product Safety Commission is staggering. In fact, every agency designed for public protection is now badly limping.

A band of bureaucrats with more interest in party politics than public protection now control policy in Washington. Big business no longer needs lobbyists—it controls the offices.

Joan Claybrook's *Retreat From Safety* reads like a catalogue of catastrophe. It leaves no doubt that with four more years of Reagan regulating regula-

tions, there will be no safe place to hide.

Claybrook, with the help of the staff of Public Citizen—the Nadar-founded citizens lobbying group—writes with an insider's view of the regulatory process and is a former administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Reagan's attack on America's health, writes Claybrook, is directed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), David Stockman's favorite hunting ground. Historically, the OMB has controlled the budgets of various agencies. But a mere three weeks after taking office, Reagan gave the OMB—with Executive Order 12291—new and unprecedented power to decide the worth of major regulations.

The final determination of a regulation's value has shifted away from agencies, where public participation in the regulatory process is required or at least tolerated. It is now in a secretive new arena where the value is biased by private interest groups and decided by the same budget slashers that are gutting social

cals and other safety hazards. Millions more are repeatedly exposed to cancer-causing chemicals. Possibly 23-38 percent of all cancer deaths may have been caused by work place carcinogens. About 18 percent of the nation's textile workers exposed to cotton dust suffer from brown lung.

Yet industry is recalcitrant to any change to prevent those unnecessary deaths and injuries.

When the regulation is favored by an industry, however, passage is accomplished with lightning speed. In 1982 when seven people died after taking cyanide-contaminated Tylenol capsules, the over-the-counter drug industry became panicked by the publicity generated. Industry representatives actually asked the federal government for regulations on tamper-resistant packaging, and in one month the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) issued the regulations.

Compare the government's action on the Tylenol case to that of pesticides. At the EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs a blanket of secrecy has been thrown over nearly all information. In fact, last year a coalition of environmental and labor groups sued the federal government to withdraw pesticide regulations issued between March 1982 and May 1983 because they were reached in closed-door negotiations with industry.

The suit also contends that the cancer-causing potential of 60 percent of all pesticides in use have not been tested, that the

ability to cause mutations has not been tested in 90 percent, and that 60 percent have not been tested for the ability to cause birth defects.

There are also 140 pesticides on the market whose registration is based fully or partially on fraudulent tests conducted by a research firm in 1976. Even though the safety of these pesticides has yet to be proven, the EPA is allowing them to remain on the market while the required tests are repeated.

Retreat from Safety is an excellent agency-to-agency account of Reagan's scorched regulatory strategy. It gives a shocking look at what atrocities to expect from four more years.

Paul Choitz, a Philadelphia writer, writes regularly on environmental politics.

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By Pat Aufderheide

"I'm having so much fun I ought to be arrested," the ebullient, combative William Bennett, chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, is fond of saying to interviewers.

These days, some civil rights activists might agree. Last January, along with colleague and friend William Bradford Reynolds at the Justice Department, Bennett flamboyantly refused to file forms outlining plans for affirmative action required by the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission. Last summer Rep. Cardiss Collins (D-IL) called him before a subcommittee to ask him why. And these days, Collins and Bennett are, in his words, "pen-pals" in a mounting exchange of documents.

Since he took the appointment to the agency charged with cul-

terms of moral indignation.

Arguing in his letter to EEOC head Clarence Thomas that affirmative action was basically reverse discrimination, since in Bennett's view it inevitably brings about quotas, he wrote, "Blindness to color, race and national origins is the hallmark of civilized justice as embodied in the principles of this Republic."

medial steps are needed to insure equal employment opportunities.

Or, as Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun argued in the *Bakke* case, "in order to treat some persons equally, we must treat them differently." The results since 1964 have been dramatic, especially in private industry.

For instance, in private corporations with government contracts—which must abide by EEOC rules to obtain the contracts—both minority and female hiring rose more than 15 percent in the period 1974-80, with only 3 percent growth in total employment. Non-government contracting firms by contrast had a much lower rate.

But to Bennett, a man deeply uncomfortable with ambiguity, "blindness" toward existing patterns of discrimination is a defense of equality. He does not stand alone in this administration, either. His very public refusal joins criticisms of affirmative action by the new Civil Rights Commission, the Reagan administration and the Justice Department.

At the Collins hearing, Civil Rights Commission minority member Mary Berry angrily charged Bennett with "hypocritical rhetoric," saying that flaunting the failure to file was part of a trend to "make the public believe some onerous burden is being placed on us." EEOC head Thomas, a conscientious conservative sympathetic to the viewpoint of Thomas Sowell, also pointed out that the high-publicity refusal of a few agencies to cooperate contrasted with a record of all-time-high compliance on the part of other agencies. (He may disagree with current policy, but Thomas believes that the solution is in changing existing law rather than circumventing it.)

If Bennett's principles fall conveniently in line with political strategy, Berry is certainly not alone in seeing it. At a February meeting of the National Council on the Humanities, the NEH's advisory group of scholars, historian Mary Beth Norton criticized Bennett's refusal to file because "it aligns the agency with a position that is identified with a particular political point of view, and it has politicized the agency."

A look at the NEH's staff does not suggest a zealous pursuit of equal opportunity. Forty-four percent of white employees are in the upper civil service grades, while only 10 percent of blacks are. The lowest ranks in the agency contain three-and-a-half times as many women as men, and there are only three Hispanics among 242 employees.

Recent hiring at the top has favored white men who are acquaintances of Bennett or of his right-hand man John Agresto, even though according to his hearing testimony Bennett has followed elaborate minority recruitment procedures. Implying a dearth of qualified minorities, Bennett asked Rep. Collins, who

is black, to suggest any qualified people.

On the other hand, the agency hiring has not strictly followed standards based on qualification. For instance, after giving the head of NEH public relations an unprecedented year leave of absence, Bennett filled the slot with a woman who had previously handled administrative affairs at his own think tank, the National Humanities Center.

Just how principled is Bennett in his raising of affirmative action issues? In one instance, he actually fudged the record of dissent. During the February National Council on the Humanities meeting, a Carter appointee proposed a resolution calling for equal treatment in hiring after Norton raised the issue. The resolution, however, carefully sidestepped approval for Bennett's action. Still, some of Bennett's critics abstained, fearing the appearance of an endorsement, and one voted "no."

But in the original minutes of the meeting the abstention of one member and the single "no" vote had disappeared from the record. (The minutes were corrected after protest in the May council meeting.)

Further, the NEH issued a press release following the February council meeting describing the neutral resolution as "supporting Bennett's position."

Bennett stands proud on his

record of having supported civil rights while at the University of Mississippi in his youth, but others would like concrete evidence of his intentions in this era. As the hearings drew to a close, Collins suggested that if the NEH cannot abide by rules that other agencies observe, its budget could be held hostage.

Ironically, the threat echoed the very sentiments of Bennett, who as a writer of the section in the 1980 Heritage Foundation report "Mandate for Leadership" on the NEH, had argued for drastic cutbacks in the NEH's activities. Agresto left the meeting with an impish smile on his face. "We've been trying to convince Congress to cut our budget for years," he said. "I hope she does it—and you can quote me on that."

Rather than suspend funds to the cultural agency in an election year, Collins is opting for a watch-and-see approach and has also proposed legislation strengthening EEOC's enforcement power. And if the flamboyant, contentious Bennett style is any indication, there ought to be plenty to watch.

©Pat Aufderheide
(Coming next week: a report on the NEH under Bennett and its imperiled future.)

NEH chief Bennett's negative response to calls for affirmative action is termed hypocritical.

CALENDAR

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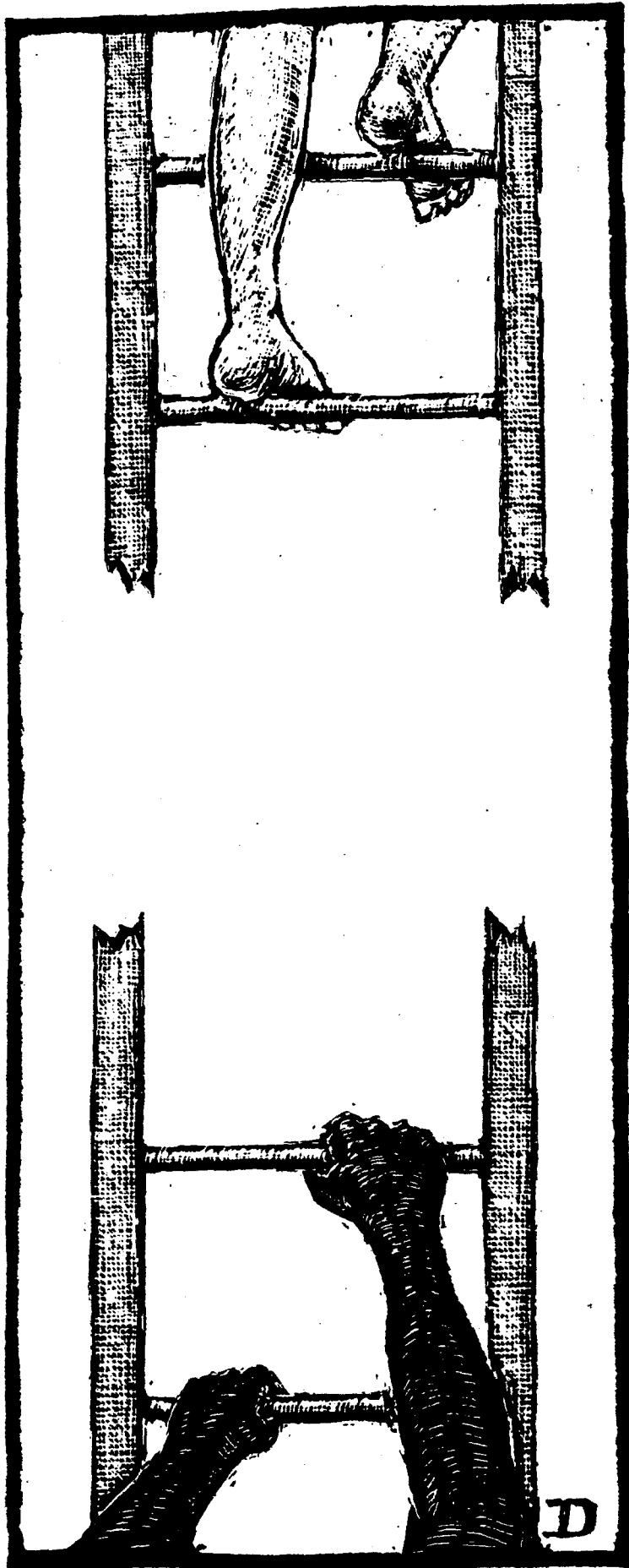
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Bob Damm

tural enrichment of the public in 1981, Bennett has been known as a man who knows how to make headlines. Indeed, he hand-delivered his refusal to the *Washington Post* at the same time that he mailed it to the EEOC. But Bennett argues that in this case principle is at stake. The co-author, with the Justice Department's Terry Eastland, of an anti-affirmative-action monograph called "Counting by Race," Bennett couched his argument in

He pronounced that setting "goals" for affirmative action is "pernicious." In later conversation, he also commented that he would simply have found filing the document "degrading."

In fact, quotas are explicitly excluded from the legislation that aspired to make the federal government a "model employer." The logic behind affirmative action was simple: since historical discrimination affects current hiring practices, re-

Blackout

Continued from page 16

age. The story, a taut whodunit centering around the investigation of murder on a Southern Army post in 1944, was adapted from Charles Fuller's Pulitzer Prize-winning play. The lead actors are both celebrated—Howard Rollins Jr. was nominated for an Academy award for his portrayal of Coalhouse Walker in *Ragtime* and Adolph Caesar won an Obie for his performance in the play from which *A Soldier's Story* was adapted. Jewison, whose films have been nominated for scores of Oscars, won best picture for the 1969 film *In the Heat of the Night*.

Still, Jewison had to offer to work for free to get a studio to consider financing the project, and then that studio—Warner Bros.—dropped out in the rewrite stage. Columbia eventually bought the project and funded it at a little more than half the going rate.

Apologists have argued that *A Soldier's Story* met such a cool response because it wasn't "commercial" enough, not because of its black cast. But the weight of the evidence suggests that, for Hollywood, a black dramatic lead and non-commercial go together.

The proviso extends even to promotional material. The TV clips for *A Soldier's Story*, along with being deadly boring, could hardly be called clips at all. They are made up of a voice-over, a gun shot, and a body of indeterminable race falling to the ground. No black face appears in them.

A similar technique was used in promoting *Ragtime* in 1981. The film starred Howard Rollins Jr. and centered around Coalhouse Walker, a mild-mannered black man who turned guerrilla bomber after he was publicly humiliated by a band of bigots. Paramount pretended it

had another film altogether. The clips supplied for TV centered on Jimmy Cagney's relatively minor role and—inexplicably ballroom dancing scenes.

Considering the recent successful films featuring black actors, it would seem that such caution is unwarranted—until one examines the roles black actors and actresses have played in those films. If comedy is the new ghetto for black actors then Eddie Murphy and Richard Pryor are that ghetto's chief inhabitants. Pryor was little more than a Stepin Fetchit to Christopher Reeve in *Superman III*. Murphy, though he stands somewhat more erect, has not yet had his own vehicle. In *Trading Places* he was paired with Dan Aykroyd and in *48 Hours* with Nick Nolte. The implicit message of these pairings is that he is not capable of bringing in the crowds on his own. (Murphy told *Time* this month, "I don't think the country is ready for black leading men. White guys won't accept their ladies going nuts over a black actor.") Jennifer Beals in *Flashdance* and Prince in *Purple Rain* are—dancer and singer, respectively—two black characterizations readily accepted. Moreover, Beals is so light-skinned that virtually all viewers perceive her to be white.

This year's really big films have had blacks in cameo roles where they appear at all. In *Gremlins* for example, the obligatory black man (Glynn Turman) appears briefly, only to be killed by one of Spielberg's little beasties.

In *Ghost Busters* Ernie Hudson, who is black, joins the Aykroyd, Murray and Ramis ghost exterminating team, but is a late, inconsequential and clearly the studio's way of saying, "Well, we got a black guy in this one." In *Tightrope*, Janet MacLachlan, a social scientist, has the briefest moment's walk down the hall with Clint Eastwood.

It is a sobering fact that two of the most recent celebrated roles for blacks have plantation-like backdrops. Alfre Woodard, an Oscar nominee last year for

her role in *Cross Creek*, played Mary Steenburgen's maid. (By the way, the first Academy Award given to a black woman came to Hattie McDaniel in 1939 for her role as Vivian Lee's doting, loyal maid in *Gone with the Wind*.)

In *Places in the Heart*, Danny Glover—touted in some quarters as a sure Oscar nominee—plays a black man who hasn't come such a very long way since *Birth of a Nation*. An inept thief, he is caught after stealing Sally Field's silverware. Only through Field's benevolence is he spared from prison and allowed to work in his benefactor's cotton patch. He is eventually beaten and run out of town by the KKK.

Those black actors who have escaped the plantation and other oblivions—namely Lou Gossett who won an Oscar for his performance in *An Officer and a Gentleman*, Rollins in *Ragtime*—have had difficulty finding work. Rollins, in interviews after his lauded performance in *Ragtime*, said he would pass up scripts with only obligatory black folks. He waited three years before *A Soldier's Story* came along.

Blacks, who make up about a fifth of movie audiences, respond well to movies featuring black actors as full, multi-dimensional people. But will an influx of such films create a movie-house version of white flight? Indications are that *A Soldier's Story* and *The Brother from Another Planet* will do well at the box office, but they won't be blockbusters. And if other public spectacles are any measure, the mass response to blacks could be negative for a time.

Sporting events offer an obvious parallel. As the National Basketball Association grew blacker, its crowds tailed off. Some, like Frank Deford of *Sports Illustrated*, contend the second was a consequence of the first. Owners and coaches began keeping lesser white players on and cutting more talented black players as a bone to the fans, writes David Halberstram in *The Breaks of the Game*.

Football seems to have made the adjustments more smoothly, but then it has kept quarterback, the sacred position, mostly white.

Politics offer another obvious parallel. There is evidence that a significant portion of whites are not willing to vote for black candidates. Sydney H. Schanberg, writing in the *New York Times* on September 15, discussed that process as it applies to a House of Representatives election in Queens: "...Blacks voted for a white candidate. It's nothing new; they've been voting for white Democrats for generations. And sometimes...they vote for the white candidate over the black one, even though the black has a fine record of public service and is qualified. They simply thought that the white incumbent was better or could do more for their district."

Of course, in those cities that have black mayors—Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Gary, Ind.—some whites do vote for blacks. But, Schanberg writes, "...those votes have been cast almost exclusively by liberals and largely by Jews. Nothing on the white side has approached the fair-minded and color-blind pattern of voting by blacks."

In sporting events, electoral politics and now in films, blacks have been able to empathize with whites. Is the reverse not true? Is it really the case, as the Universal Television executive suggests, that white TV viewers and theatergoers cannot jibe emotionally with a hero or heroine who happens to be black?

Was Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Charles Fuller accurate when he told *Time* recently, "White Americans trust black people when we sing, dance or tell jokes. It's when we stop laughing that people get itchy."?

If all the answers are "yes," the least serious of the implications is that black dramatic actors should expect to remain out of work for a long, long time. ■ *Brent Staples is a writer for the Chicago Sun-Times.*

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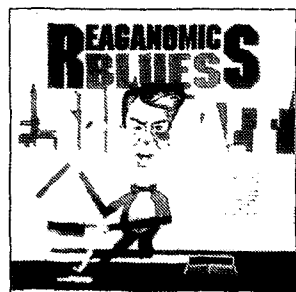
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HOLLYWOOD

BLACKOUT

By Brent Staples

**When blacks
stop joking**

**do whites
stop watching?**

DO BLACK FACES PLAY WELL IN Peoria? Will white audiences pay to see black actors who don't sing, dance or tell jokes? According to Robert Harris, president of Universal Television, the answer is flat out no. In an interview published in the October 13 *TV Guide*, Harris repeated the old axiom: a Nielsen is a Nielsen is a Nielsen.

"Aside from comedy shows, there has never been a long-running hit series with an all-black cast or a single black lead," Harris said. And the law, according to the Nielsens, is that if viewers don't watch it, it doesn't get on.

Answers to the same questions are awaited in Hollywood, particularly since this month's release of John Sayles' *The Brother from Another Planet* and Norman Jewison's *A Soldier's Story*—two major motion pictures with largely black casts.

The \$350,000 that went into making Sayles' comedy about a black extraterrestrial who comes to Harlem came in from the producer's MacArthur award. Norman Jewison, who went the traditional financing route, found Hollywood hostile to his project.

A Soldier's Story seemed a solid pack-
Continued on page 15

Louis Gossett Jr. as he
appeared in *AN OFFICER
AND A GENTLEMAN*.
Richard Pryor with Jackie
Gleason in *THE TOY*.

